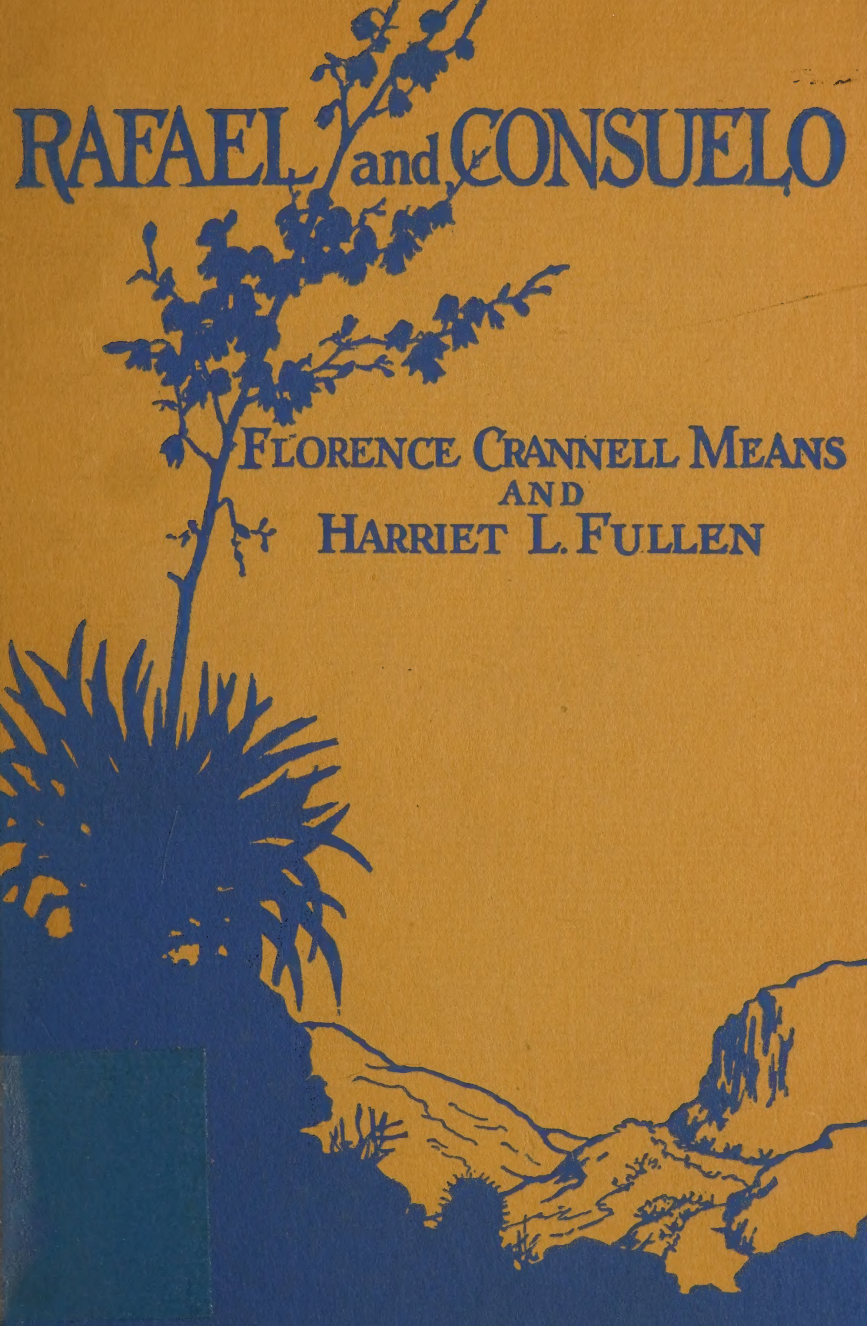
RAFAEL and CONSUELO

FLORENCE CRANNELL MEANS
AND
HARRIET L. FULLEN



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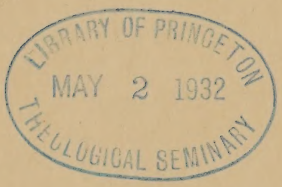

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RAFAEL AND CONSUELO

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STORIES AND STUDIES
ABOUT MEXICANS IN THE UNITED STATES
FOR PRIMARY CHILDREN

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By
FLORENCE CRANNELL MEANS
and
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PART I

STORIES AND BACKGROUND NOTES

By

FLORENCE CRANNELL MEANS

PALM HUT AND SHOUTING SCHOOL

RAFAEL lay full length on the ground before the little palm hut and listened to his sister Consuelo. She was sitting cross-legged among the flowers, chattering eagerly. Early morning sunshine shone pleasantly warm; early morning bird songs sounded around them, and early morning fragrance of toasting cornmeal filled the air.

"Goria tells me it is the most wonderful school in the world," said Consuelo. "Only think! Those children learn reading and writing and numbers, of course; but also they learn the bee-eautiful drawnwork and embroidery—"

"The boys do?" Rafael asked, sitting up and staring at her.

"Oh, of course not! The girls, I mean. And raising chickens and rabbits and bees. And weaving blankets and baskets. And growing flowers and things to eat. And cooking."

"Perez says everybody helped make that schoolhouse," said Rafael, "even the boys and girls. And it's a grand schoolhouse, like buildings in the city; not like our country houses."

They both turned to look at their own house. Its walls were formed of bundles of palm leaves, and palm leaves made its peaked roof. It had one door and no windows. That didn't matter much. Who wanted to stay indoors, when outside were sunshine and trees and birds and bees and flowers? It had no chimney. That didn't matter

much, either; the smoke used the front door just as the family did. It was using it now, and curling lazily upward into the blue sky. Mother was making the *tortillas* for breakfast.

"Don't you suppose," asked Consuelo, "that we could walk to the new school, if we started very early in the morning?"

"No, I don't suppose so. It is much too far. But if we will only wait, there will be a school like it in our own neighborhood. In a few years all Mexico will have those fine schools. The President has promised it."

"It is all very well for you to say 'Wait,'" complained Consuelo. "You have a sort of school to go to while you're waiting. But there isn't any place for me, and I'm already eight years old—only two years younger than you are."

It was true. A rich Mexican had hired a teacher for the boys, but he was an old-fashioned Mexican and didn't believe that girls needed teaching.

"It's all very well for you," Consuelo repeated, "but for me it is different. If only our father would go to Monterrey, as Señor Aguilar wanted him to. Surely the schools there would be just as good as Perez' and Goria's. If only he would—"

Rafael was sniffing the toasted cornmeal smell of those *tortillas*. "You know very well Papa said he didn't want to. And as for me, I'm too hungry for any more talk." And he ran into the hut, leaving Consuelo to follow.

Their mother crouched on the earthen floor, baking the flat corn cakes on a hot slab. Her stove was two or three stones with a fire between.

You would have liked to see the Lopez family in their cool, shady hut, with the sunlight sifting through the palm-leaf walls. There was Papa Juan, with shiny black hair and smooth brown skin—not so red as the skin of our northern Indians, though he is an Indian, too. He wore no shoes, but he would scarcely step outdoors without his hat, a straw hat with brim so wide and curved that he could use it for a market basket and carry all manner of things in it. There was Mama Refugio, with her hair in braids over her shoulders. She wore a sleeveless white blouse and a long slim skirt of blue with orange stripes.

There was Rafael, small and sturdy, with eyes and hair as black as his father's, and a white shirt and trousers like his father's, too. There was Consuelo, tiny and brown, with roses in her cheeks, and eyes like black pansies, and long thick braids that Rafael thought most beautiful. She was dressed exactly like her mother, except that her long slim skirt was striped with red. And there were the two dogs nosing round among them, hoping for something to eat, and the large pig lying comfortably asleep by the stove.

The children ate hungrily, using *tortillas* as dishes for their smoking-hot peppery beans, and as spoons to carry them to their mouths. When they had finished, Rafael pulled on his hat and started for school, Consuelo following him. Since she could not be a pupil herself, she liked to walk to the schoolhouse with her brother, and peer in at the door or listen at the crack.

It was mostly a matter of listening. There were a dozen boys in the room, some sitting on the benches,

others crouching on the floor. A few held tattered books, and others rocked to and fro, shouting at the tops of their voices.

Rafael stubbed his toe on the door-sill and went tumbling into the classroom on all fours. The boys laughed and the teacher frowned. Rafael got up sheepishly and hung his *sombrero* on the wall, which was already nearly covered with the big straw hats. Then he sat down and shut his eyes and began in businesslike fashion: *"Ah, bay, say, day. Ah, bay, say, day."*

He was saying his alphabet, in Spanish of course. It seemed to Consuelo that he had been learning *ah, bay, say,* and *day,* ever since he started in school. The boy next to him was repeating something else, and Consuelo listened eagerly. No, it wasn't her part; she had just learned as far as *N, O, P.* She hadn't told Rafael; he wouldn't like to have her get ahead of him. And she loved her brother; he was strong and brave, even though he was slow with his *ah, bay, says.*

There it was: *O, P, Q, R. Q* was the twisty one on the sheet of paper pinned against the wall, and *R* the round-stomached one without a head. When she had asked Rafael about them, he couldn't tell her; not even about the *O* like a pulled-out *tortilla. He* didn't know what they looked like, he said.

Consuelo wrapped her *rebozo* round her head and rocked to and fro like the boys, while she said inside herself, *"A, B, C,—"* and on to *R* (of course you understand now that she said them in Spanish). She almost fell asleep crooning it, in the warm sweet sunshine. Presently Consuelo slipped away among the trees.

"May we—Rafael and I—go to the new school of Goria

and Perez, if we can walk that far?" she asked her mother when she reached the palm hut.

"But it is much too far," said Mama Lopez.

"May we try it and see?" begged Consuelo.

"Oh, to be sure, you may try it and see—*mañana.* But if you will only wait, the fine new schools will come here also. Now bring your frame and linen, and see if you can make the first drawnwork stitches without mistake, little Center-of-my-Heart."

They set up the frames outdoors in the sunshine, and while Consuelo worked at simple beginning stitchery, her mother wrought patterns like snowflakes and frostwork. And all the while birds flashed by them, gaudy green ones with yellow heads, and humming-birds ("honey-suckers," Consuelo called them) dancing on the air.

Next morning Consuelo followed Rafael, as she so often did. "Brother," she cried, pulling at his sleeve eagerly when they came to a crossing of the paths, "this is the way to the new school. Goria has told me so. Why not go today and see if it is too far for us?"

Rafael looked doubtfully down the unknown green path.

"Oh, please!" Consuelo pulled his sleeve again.

"We-ell," he agreed, and they started briskly along the new trail.

For a while they walked rapidly, though there were many interesting things to see, flowers and birds and lizards, and parades of huge ants, and butterflies that floated like great blossoms above their heads. At length they came to a place where the path divided. Here they stopped, not knowing which way to go. Fortunately there was a hut not far away, a little hut made of adobe bricks,

and a woman was sitting at the door weaving a basket. She told them the right way to go, and gave them each a *tortilla* besides. The *tortillas* tasted good, for they had walked so far that they were hungry again.

On and on and on they went. The sun climbed higher and higher in the pale blue sky. It grew warmer and warmer. Consuelo's braids were hot and wet on her shoulders, and her face burned. She began to wonder if they had not taken the wrong turning, after all.

But, no! They came to another hut, a palm hut like their own, and an old, old woman who was grinding corn in the shade. They asked her if the school was near, and the old woman nodded. They threw themselves down in the shade beside her and rested a little while. The old woman went on grinding corn. She dropped a handful of soaked kernels on the grinding stone which stood on legs like a very crooked stool, and she rolled and rubbed with another stone that was a little like a rolling-pin. As she worked she talked to them.

"Yes," she said, "I know the school well. My grandchildren go there, and they are learning everything in the world. And besides that, their papa and mama go too."

"Not their papa and mama!" cried Rafael, staring at her in amazement. "Do you mean a grown man and woman? Who ever heard of such a thing? Then who works to get them their food and clothing, if the papa and the mama go to school like children?"

The grandmother laughed. "They go at night," she explained, "after the day's work is done. They learn to read and write, and other things besides: what babies ought to eat, and how to make the corn grow bigger."

More eager than ever, the children walked on toward

the wonderful school. It was nearly noon; the sun shone hotly through openings in the thick woods, and the boy and girl walked slowly, with dragging feet, though they tried their best to hurry.

"It doesn't seem as if I can walk another step," sighed Consuelo.

"Oh, yes, sister," said Rafael, "because right ahead I see a clearing, and I'm almost sure it's the school."

It was really true. There stood the pleasant building, with the Mexican flag waving proudly above it and well tended flowers all about it. Consuelo and Rafael hurried to bathe their dusty feet in the brook, and then they went timidly up to the door.

There is not time to tell about their visit, for the school was more interesting even than the brother and sister had dreamed. The teachers were kind and made a place for them, and the children shared with them their noon meal of *tortillas* and beans. Yet it was a sad pair that came limping to the door of the Lopez hut when the evening shadows were falling.

"We couldn't possibly walk there and back every day," said Rafael.

"To the new school?" asked Mama Lopez, who had been anxiously watching for them. "So that is where you have been all this long day! Yes, I know I said you could go, but I didn't think you'd do it. It must be four long miles through the forest."

"Four!" said Papa Lopez. "Nearer six, I should think."

"But, oh, it was so wonderful," said Consuelo, blinking hard to keep back the tears. "The singing! And the pictures! And the flowers!" She rocked to and fro on

the floor, holding her hot, scratched little feet in her hands.

Papa Lopez looked hard at them over his evening bean stew.

"I am sure our children should have schooling if they want it so badly as that," he said. "They shall have it. Papa Lopez promises."

Consuelo opened her mouth in amazed questioning, but Rafael asked the question before she had time.

"Do you mean we shall move near the wonderful school?"

"Near one even more wonderful," said Papa Lopez, nodding many times at Mama, who seemed to understand all about it. "Señor Aguilar has asked me to come whenever I will, to be his gardener in Monterrey."

"But I thought you did not wish to go," faltered Consuelo.

"No, I have not wished to go," said Papa Lopez. "This is the place of my birth, and I would rather spend my days here. But when my children's hearts are so set on learning, it changes my wishes. Yes, we shall go to Monterrey."

RAILWAY TRAINS

ALTHOUGH Rafael was ten years old and Consuelo eight, they had never been far away from their own little palm hut. It didn't seem possible that they could leave it so suddenly and go so far as the distant city of Monterrey. Yet before many days had passed, the palm hut stood empty among the flowers and birds and bees.

Packing had been little trouble; there were no chairs and tables, and only reed mats for beds. There were a few hand-woven baskets to take, and a change of clothing apiece.

The train was not new to them. They had seen the outside of it before, as it hurried through the countryside, and they had thought the passengers were brave to ride an iron monster like that, running twenty or thirty miles an hour and blowing black smoke through its queer nose. It was another matter to be themselves the passengers. The whole family perched on one of the hard wooden benches that ran from end to end of the car, and looked at their fellow travelers.

On and on went the train. Our friends munched their *tortillas* and slept, Rafael leaning against his father's knee, and Consuelo curled up against her mother. They went on eating and sleeping and looking, for an endless time. The train stopped at all the villages, many of them only groups of adobe huts. People got off and people got on. People laughed and talked and ate and smoked and slept, and it grew tiresome and close. It grew cold besides, for

the train was panting up on to a high table-land where the air was as chilly as on a mountain-top.

Father and Rafael carried their blankets. Almost always the men wore their warm *sarapes* and were ready for any weather, nestling their heads and chins down into the woolly comfort, and letting their white cotton legs take care of themselves as if they didn't matter. But the women's wraps were only the scarf-like *rebozos* instead of the blanket-like *sarapes,* and Mama and Consuelo huddled together and shivered in the unfamiliar cold.

Soon, however, the train stopped its hard, puffing climb, and slid easily downhill. It grew warmer; Consuelo and Mama stopped shivering. Warmer still; they panted for air. At last they were in Monterrey.

Here all was very different. There were tall houses in solid walls against the street, broken only by doors and iron-barred windows—houses and houses, until it seemed all the world must be crowded together there. There was a market-square like the queerest outdoor store, where hundreds of people sat on the ground showing things to sell—every sort of thing, from flowers to scraps of meat.

And then they came to the house of Señor Aguilar, set solidly among its neighbors. In that solid wall a door opened for the Lopez family. They went through a sort of outdoor hall into an indoor-outdoors. Or perhaps it was an outdoor-indoors. At any rate, it was a yard in the middle of the house, an open court with the sky for a ceiling, and the rooms of the house built round it and opening on it. There was a brick walk. There was grass. There were trees. There was a fountain. There were flowers.

As for the rooms, Consuelo and Rafael peeped in timidly

while Papa Lopez talked with Señor Aguilar, and they thought there had never been rooms so splendid in all the world. Really, though, they were like the rooms in the houses of thousands of other rich Mexican people.

This little glimpse was all the children were to have, for Papa's plans seemed to have gone quite wrong. He could not work for Señor Aguilar, because Señor Aguilar was just about to move away from Monterrey. Only a few days before, he had decided to go to Puebla, a city not far from the little palm hut.

Would the Lopezes like to go back to Puebla with him? The Lopezes talked it over very seriously, and then they told him no, thank you a thousand times, but no, Señor.

Would they, then, return to the little palm hut? This, too, the Lopezes talked over very seriously. And then they told him no, thank you a thousand thousand times, but no, Señor.

What did they plan to do? Papa Lopez drew a deep breath. "We think we will go on up into the United States, Señor, since we are so near."

Consuelo's lip quivered. "But the wonderful school?" she whispered to Rafael.

"Pooh!" said Rafael. "In the United States there is a wonderful school under every tree, they tell me."

It was arranged that Papa Lopez was to work on the railway in New Mexico. His new employers paid the railroad fare for the whole family, so that they might move to their new home. Rafael and Consuelo felt that they were getting to be real travelers.

"But this United States is very ugly," Rafael grumbled, as the train carried them at length out of their own land.

"No flowers," sighed Consuelo, "nothing but brown old grass and twisty cedar trees and cactus. And so cold! Brrrr! so cold!"

"It is their cold season," said Mama Lopez. "They have a cold season and a hot season in this United States, instead of a wet and a dry season, as with us. Maybe there are flowers when it is warm. The good God would hardly make a country so big and brown and forget to put in a few flowers."

"Certainly the houses are strange," Rafael said more cheerfully. "I suppose they build them on wheels so they can move whenever they please."

Wheels? Yes, the workmen's houses were made from old box-cars. You have all seen groups of them drawn up on a siding. Perhaps you've thought it would be fun to live in one.

The Lopezes thought their car quite fine. It had a wooden floor, while the palm hut floor had been of earth, and the Aguilar floor of tile. It had a chimney, or at least a rusty stovepipe that carried the smoke entirely away, while Mexico is a land almost without chimneys. It had a stove that bothered Mama Lopez greatly, though it wasn't much of a stove at that. And the car had two iron bedsteads, with springs and mattresses, and a table, and windows with glass!

In the next car lived a friendly family with many children. "And see what they have given us," Consuelo said, looking back over her shoulder and stammering in her eagerness as she climbed into the home car. "Plants with flowers, for the windows! So many that Rafael is carrying them for me in a basket. Oh, ooooh!"

It was a cry of distress, for at that exact moment

Rafael went tumbling on the ground. Out of his arms flew the basket. Out of the basket flew a shower of tin cans. Out of the tin cans flew dirt and plants. Anxiously Consuelo hurried back down the steps and gathered up the bruised and battered treasure, Rafael helping with shamefaced sulkiness. "I didn't see the old rail," he mumbled.

They reset the drooping plants in their gaily papered tomato cans, and Mama Lopez stood them in the sunshiny window. There she and Consuelo watered them so faithfully that they soon straightened their drooping heads and put out new leaves and blossoms that made a streak of color in the dingy home.

"But there is no school," mourned Consuelo. "Not even one for boys, where I can sit at the crack of the door and hear the stories they tell."

"I don't much care," said Rafael.

"But I—oh, I wanted school! You said there'd be a school."

So then Rafael plucked up courage and went to the American boss. "We were told," he said, sweeping off his hat in a great bow, "that there were schools in this country. But here there is no school."

The boss looked down at him with a smile. "We've been talking about that," he said kindly, in Spanish. "We find there are a good many children around here. You're going to have your school, young man."

"When?" Rafael asked rather hopelessly. *"Mañana?"*

The foreman laughed. "Tomorrow? Oh, no! But I shouldn't wonder if it would be next week."

"Certainly this is a very quick country," said Rafael, his face brightening. *"Mil gracias, Señor!"*

He did not have to go home to tell Consuelo the good news. She was hovering wide-eyed in the background.

"Next week?" she gasped. "Where, do you suppose? How, do you suppose?"

"I shall expect it when I see it," Mama Lopez said wisely.

Consuelo and Rafael watched everywhere for signs of building or American magic. When one day another box-car was backed in on their siding, however, they had no idea that the magic had begun. Windows grew in the sides of that box-car. A stovepipe sprouted from the roof of that box-car. Desks and seats were unloaded from the train and carried into that box-car.

And on Monday morning of next week, a brisk little lady stood in the doorway of that box-car and briskly rang a bell—smilingly rang a bell!

What a rustle and bustle there was in Box-car Row! What a hurrying and scurrying in the house of Lopez! What a combing and braiding and brushing and smoothing! And then what deep bowings! What wide eyes to drink in this American school!

Down each side of a center aisle was a row of double seats and desks. In the front end were the teacher's desk and chair. On the wall at either side of the door were blackboards on which the teacher had written *"Good morning,"* in Spanish and in English.

Consuelo looked a little doubtfully at the box-car school. It did not seem nearly so wonderful as the wonderful school she and Rafael had visited in Mexico. For a minute she was disappointed.

Then Consuelo looked at Teacher. When she looked at Teacher, she wasn't doubtful at all. So shining of bobbed

hair! So smiling! So clean, as if she were a wax lady or maybe an angel! Consuelo's heart sang a happy little tune. "Anyway," she thought, "she's a wonderful teacher!"

THE BOX-CAR CHRISTMAS

RAFAEL and Consuelo were sure that their box-car teacher was the most wonderful of all teachers. And they soon found that a box-car school can be a happy place, even though it was not quite the wonderful school of their dreams. There were twenty children, the youngest four years old and the oldest sixteen, and all from the string of box-car homes.

"How many of you speak English?" Teacher had asked the very first morning.

One, two, three, four brown hands fluttered in air.

"Then we shall have to have most of our lessons in Spanish. How many of you have been to school before, either in Mexico or this country?"

One, two, three, eight brown hands went up, Rafael's highest of all.

"All the past wet season have I gone to the school," he told her proudly.

"And your sister, did she go with you?"

"No, she has not gone. She knows nothing, the poor Consuelo."

"And what have you learned in the school?"

"We have learned the history. You wish that I say it? —Adam and Eve were the first man and woman, and—" he began in a hurried singsong.

"Not just now," said Teacher. "What else did you learn?"

"The alphabet," Rafael replied unwillingly.

"Say it."

"A, B, C, D,"—he said it in Spanish—*"ah, bay, say, day—ah, bay, say, day—"*

"E, F, G, H," a little voice across the aisle went on (in Spanish, of course). Rafael looked at her with wonder, and Teacher with interest. *"I, J, K, L,"* Consuelo continued, before she knew that she was reciting alone. She clapped a timid hand over her mouth.

Teacher marked up a white *E* on the board with a white stick. "What is this, Rafael?"

Rafael screwed his eyes at it and shook his head sulkily.

"I'm sorry," Consuelo told him that night. "I couldn't help it, Brother. But see how easy it is. *E,* like a stick and three more sticks,"—she was marking with coal on the side of their car—"and *F* with the bottom stick lost off; and *G* like a *C* with a shelf on—"

Rafael had turned his back. The idea of being taught by a girl, two years younger, and one who had only been to school through a crack! Nevertheless he went back to the car wall that night and drew a whole army of *E*'s and *F*'s and *G*'s. They were very good letters, too. It was strange, thought his sister, how much better he did in the home car than in the school car.

Besides reading and writing, they were learning number work and drawing and singing. It was so pleasant that they almost forgot the warmth and flowers and birds they had left behind in Mexico.

For it was cold December now in central New Mexico. One noon when they started out the school door, Rafael and Consuelo stopped in surprise. Something strange was happening.

"What is it?" stammered Rafael. "What is in the air

—like white cornmeal?" Quickly he thrust out head and hand. Quickly he drew them in again. "But it is cold," he cried. "The cornmeal is frozen."

There on his sleeve were beautiful little wheels and stars, like the patterns Mama Lopez had made in her drawnwork. As the children looked they faded, leaving only drops of water.

"It is snow," explained Teacher, laughing at their surprise.

"Such as made white the mountain-tops in our homeland," said Ramona.

"It is time for snow," Teacher went on, "for Christmas is coming very soon."

"But I suppose there will be no Christmas here?" Consuelo asked mournfully.

"Indeed and indeed yes! The nicest Christmas that ever was!"

"With a *posada* and *piñatas?*" gasped another little girl.

"Tell me what they are."

"Oh, the *piñatas* are such fun," Ramona told her eagerly. "Dolls they are—"

"Or ships or horses—" This from Rafael.

"Made out of clay, like pots and dishes, only thinner—"

"Big as I am, some of them!"

"And all trimmed with silver stuff and colored paper—"

"And hollow, with the inside full of *dulces* and rattles and puzzles and games and nuts—"

It seemed that the clay *piñata* with its load of goodies was hung on a tree or from the ceiling, and each child was blindfolded and given a stick with which to strike at it. They would strike mightily and hit nothing but air; swing so hard that they overbalanced and went staggering

this way and that. In the end one would succeed, breaking the *piñata* so that its treasures were showered down in a fairy storm.

"No," said Teacher when they had explained it, "I'm afraid our American *piñata* is only a Christmas tree. But Christmas trees are really very nice."

"And what have you in place of the *posada?*" asked Consuelo.

"The *posada* has first of all the *nacimiento,*" said Ramona, when Teacher asked about it. "With houses and swans and lakes so big!"—measuring on small fingers.

"And donkeys and sheep and the wise men—"

"And the sweet little baby Jesus!"

"And then—"

But Teacher stopped them. "You will all be late for dinner! I'll tell you what we'll do! You shall help me with a Christmas tree, and I will help you with a *posada.*"

From that time everything was a bustle of preparation. They made colored paper chains; they strung popcorn, popped over the schoolhouse fire; they cut pictures from Teacher's magazines, and mounted them: the queer round red-faced Santa Claus; the wise men; the Christ Child in the manger. They brought boxes of different sizes and covered them with paper and cedar sprays. They made gifts for each other, blotters and calendars and penwipers and pincushions. They practised songs.

At last the great night came—Christmas Eve! The box-car school was crowded with children and fathers and mothers and uncles and aunts. The men had helped Teacher connect strings of electric lights with batteries so that they would last for the evening. Every inch of wall was covered with the pictures the children had pasted.

Across the front end of the car was stretched a curtain of sheets.

"Our friends, we welcome you!" said Teacher, and she bowed and smiled to the grown people. Then, beating time with her hand, she led the children in a Christmas song, "Silent Night, Holy Night." They did not understand all the words, nor did the audience, but everyone liked the music.

Before the song was ended the sound of it came like an echo from the back of the car. Everyone turned to look. In at the door walked two little girls. All in white they were, with their long black hair waving over their shoulders, and silver crowns on their heads, and white candles in their hands. Their eyes were shining with happiness, and they were singing as they came. Behind them walked the smallest child in the school. She wore a flowing dress, and she was so happy that she forgot to sing, except for a word now and then. She took careful little steps, holding her hands out before her. For cradled in those tiny brown hands was a beautiful little wax figure of the baby Jesus. Two more white-dressed girls followed her, holding her long train.

"It is the angels," whispered the mothers to the fathers. "See! Our children make the *posada!*"

When they were midway of the car the angels stopped and knocked upon the wall as if it were a door and they were asking to come in. But no one answered. On they marched, singing songs in Spanish now; up to the front of the car, where they stopped and knocked again, asking *posada* (lodging for the night); down the aisle to the back of the car, up the aisle to the front once more.

This time they stopped and sang sweetly and sadly in

Spanish, "Oh, pray let us come in! The night is dark and cold!" Again and again they sang, and at last the curtains were drawn suddenly aside, and lights shone out bright and beautiful.

"The *nacimiento!*" murmured the fathers and mothers.

There in the opening stood the boxes the children had brought and covered with tissue and cedar. They were set like stairs against the wall, and all sorts of interesting scenes were arranged on them. On one step there was even a mirror lake, with a swan and a boat, and paper trees around the edge. On another were more trees, and the Wise Men on their three camels. But on the topmost one was a wee manger, with a lovely little figure of Mary leaning above it, and Joseph near by, and the shepherds, and a little lamb and two cows. High above the manger was a golden star.

The children all looked at their fathers and mothers to see how pleased they were. Every boy and girl had had part in the preparations. Teacher had sent to the city to buy the lovely little images of the Holy Family, but the rest they had managed themselves, using toys or cutting figures from cardboard. It had been necessary to change the *posada* a little in planning it for a box-car school, but it was still very like the Christmas celebration in Old Mexico, as the fathers and mothers all agreed.

It was quite complete, except that the manger was empty. And now all the children in the box-car sang together. It was in English that they sang this time, "Away in a manger." And while they sang, the tiny Rosita laid the image of the baby Jesus proudly and gently in the manger. And the *posada* was ended.

"Bonita! Bonita!" cried the fathers and mothers.

There was something more to come. Teacher opened the curtains wider still and revealed, in all its shining glory, the Christmas tree.

"Bonita!" the grown folk murmured again, while the children made their mouths into O's of wonder.

They had not guessed it could be so gay and gleaming. It was a cedar tall enough to touch the top of the car. Teacher had draped it with the chains and popcorn strings the children had made; and there were candy beads and striped canes, and bubbles of bright glass, and tiptoe on the tiptop was an angel with glistening wings.

The gifts were handed about, with an unexpected treat of candy and popcorn balls from Teacher. Once more they sang "Away in a manger," and then they went out into the frosty night.

"The United States *piñata* is different, but it is beautiful," said Consuelo.

"Certainly that is true," Rafael mumbled round a mouthful of deliciously sticky popcorn.

"But still I love our *posada* best of all. 'Away in a manger—'" hummed Consuelo as she settled down to sleep. And all night through her dreams the song sang, and the tree sparkled, and the Christ Child smiled, and the angel glistened tiptoe on the tiptop of it all.

THE BEET FIELDS

AT length the bright mild days of New Mexico grew more frequent. A tinge of green deepened over the brown prairie. Waxy white sand-lilies covered the ground with stars; cactus blooms appeared, and spires of coral gilia and scarlet paintbrush. It was almost sadly that Rafael and Consuelo left it all. For Papa Lopez had engaged to work in the Colorado beet fields during spring and summer, and they must go northward to the new home.

Especially was it hard to leave Teacher. Rafael stood silent before her, twisting his hat in his hands and not knowing anything to say. Really he felt as sorry as Consuelo, who clasped her arms round Teacher's waist and hid her wet little face against the sweet-smelling frock. "*Adios, adios,* Teacher!" she sobbed. "Good-by."

(Did you know how nearly the same are the two words of farewell? *Adios:* that means "To God," or "I leave you to God's care." *Good-by:* that means "God be with you!")

So Consuelo started for her third new home with tears making tracks down her cheeks, and Rafael with a frown furrowing his brow, since a boy couldn't possibly cry.

They grew more cheerful when they were in the train. The polished wood and soft red seats were splendid, and the tank where one could press a lever and get a drink was a delightful new plaything. They spent much of

their time walking up the aisle after a drink, and then walking down the aisle to their seats again.

How fast the prairies skimmed by their windows! This was faster than a Mexican train would dream of going, fast as a bird would fly. The towns that slid by were growing stranger and stranger. Though they still had groups of dust-colored adobes on the edges, the places themselves were not at all Mexican. Presently the hills on either side grew higher, and by the time they had grown into mountains, even the fringe of adobes had disappeared.

"And none of these houses are on wheels," cried Rafael, when at length they stepped from the train.

A big motor truck took them banging and rattling through village streets and over a few prairie miles beyond, and presently they were set down in a grove of cottonwoods before a long wooden building with an iron roof. The building had a door and a window, a door and a window, a door and a window, all the way along. "And this," the driver told them, pointing to the third door, "is your house while you are here."

Inside, it was much like the box-car house. The rain did not come through the roof as it sometimes had through the far-away palm thatch, and this floor was much drier in wet weather. Otherwise the children, and Papa and Mama Lopez, too, would really have preferred the old hut, with sunshine sifting through the palm leaves, and the flowers and the birds outside.

They hadn't much time for homesickness. When Papa Lopez worked on the railway, Mama and Rafael and Consuelo had not been able to help him; but here in the beet fields there was plenty for them all to do. There were

acres and acres of fields for growing the great brown sugar beets from which the fine white sugar would be made. There were dozens and dozens of Mexican fathers and mothers and boys and girls working in those fields to grow those beets to make that sugar.

Almost all day long the children worked with Papa and Mama Lopez, until their hands were blistered with the hoe and their backs ached with stooping to pull weeds. It was in their few free hours that they and several other children wandered round the grove on sightseeing trips of their own.

Most of all, they played with another girl and boy, Tonio and Candida, who were brother and sister. Tonio and Candida had been in the United States for several years. They knew all about everything, it seemed to the other two; and they could speak both Spanish and English.

"Let us walk up past the *casa* of the *hacendado,*" Rafael proposed one day.

"Very well. But we must keep out of sight," Tonio told him.

"And why?"

"The *hacendado* says, 'Stay where you belong.'"

"And why?"

Tonio shrugged his shoulders as if he didn't care.

While they talked, they had been walking along beside a barbed-wire fence toward another cottonwood grove where the farmhouse stood.

"Ow!" cried Rafael.

"Did something sting you?" asked Consuelo.

"No," and Rafael shook his hand in the air. "I ran into those wicked stickers they put on their fences."

"You're always running into things," Tonio said. "Never did I see a boy who could find so many things to run into. Why don't you look where you're going? Because here is the farmhouse, and we'll have to be careful."

There was a picket fence around the yard. They stood peering through and wondering at the white-and-green painted house, with its brick chimneys and broad porches and soft grass. Suddenly a yellow head bobbed round a lilac bush; another yellow head followed it, and a brown one. Four pairs of black eyes found themselves looking into brown and blue ones.

Tonio and Candida turned to run, but the others held their ground. The box-car house had been far from the town, and they had seen very few American children at close range. Now they stood staring.

Perhaps it was something about the courage of Rafael's face or the sweetness of Consuelo's that made the two American boys and their sister stare back with interest as great as their own. Rafael's blue overalls were quite American, though his hair, cut by Papa Lopez, was half way between girl-style and boy-style. As for Consuelo, she supposed her dress was American, too. Hadn't Mama Lopez made it of blue-checked gingham, with long sleeves and all in one piece? Very un-American she really looked; for the supposedly American dress had a full skirt gathered to a tight waistband, and the hem almost touched her slim brown feet. Her shining black hair still hung in heavy ropes down her little back.

At any rate, the yellow-curled girl smiled at her. "Hello," she said. "What's your name? How old are you?"

Teacher had never spoken English so fast, and Consuelo didn't understand. But Tonio and Candida had returned, and now Tonio said it over for her in Spanish. Still Consuelo shyly hung her head and tucked her finger in her mouth.

"She is Consuelo," Rafael informed them. "Eight years. I am Rafael, ten."

Shyly Yellow-Curls broke off a purple plume of lilac and handed it over the fence to Consuelo.

"Beautiful, beautiful!" said Black-Braids, laying her cheek against its sweet coolness. "A thousand thank-yous, little señorita!"

"Are your Mexican flowers as nice?" asked Yellow-Curls.

"But yes!" Consuelo answered, when Tonio had repeated the question. "Rafael, you tell them of our flowers."

The four brown boys and girls sat down outside the fence and the three white ones sat down inside it, and Rafael talked, with grand motions of the hands as he grew better acquainted. Tonio stopped him now and then to translate what he had just said.

"Beautiful flowers such as I have not seen in this land," Rafael told them. "Like those," pointing to a pansy bed, "but each one as big as three; and like those," pointing to a yellow rosebush, "bigger and more sweet. Where we live they grow wild. But by Mexico City they are most wonderful of all. My father has often told me.

"Floating gardens, they are called. They are like small islands in the lakes. Many and many years ago the Mexican people made them there. They built great baskets, bigger than you can even think, there on the water.

And they filled the baskets with dirt from the bottom of the stream, and planted vegetables and flowers in them. And there they had gardens that floated and could be rowed from place to place. Long ago it was, before the Spanish came and fought us; when Mexico all was ours.

"And the gardens are still there, though they no longer float. The earth has gathered round them and under them, until they are fastened to the lake bottom or the shore, with roots helping to hold them fast. They are great vegetable gardens and flower beds of a beauty you cannot imagine."

The others had listened with interest that had grown into doubt. Now the bigger boy rose. "I'm in the sixth grade in school," he said decidedly, "and I never heard of anything like that. Floating gardens! I *know* that's not true."

Rafael swallowed hard when Tonio told him what the other boy said. "It is true! It is!"

"You'd better go back to your own place, anyway," the white boy said. "My dad doesn't want any of you Mexes hanging round here."

Rafael did not wait to have Tonio translate. The unfriendly face and wave of the hand were easy to read. *"Por qué?"* he demanded, doubling his fists.

"Why? Because he says so; that's why. And because Mexicans swipe things, besides, if they get a chance."

Rafael looked questioningly at Tonio, and Tonio told him sulkily what the boy had said. Rafael's brown face flushed deep, and his fists rose.

"Mexicans don't! My sister and I don't!" he screamed at them. "You come out here and I'll fight you if you say it!"

Tonio put Rafael's Spanish into English, and the American boy's face changed. Slowly he grinned. Rafael was so much smaller than he, and so bravely ready to stand up for the little sister whose eyes were wet with puzzled tears, that the American boy rather liked him.

"All right, I won't say it. I guess you're all right, Mexy." He put out his hand and gave Rafael's a friendly shake.

"Pick some more flowers for the girls, Sis," the boy added. "A lot of them. Mother won't mind."

So Consuelo and Candida went home with their little noses buried in sweet-smelling roses and lilacs, and the sound of friendly voices in their ears. The first American children had turned out pretty well, after all.

SPECIAL-ROOM MAGIC

BEFORE another winter set in, the Lopez family moved on again. This time they went to Denver, where Papa Lopez had hired a house for them. Though the children were growing used to strange sights, they were almost afraid of the great city, with its clanging street cars and trucks and whizzing automobiles. Its buildings were like mountains with crowded street-valleys cut between.

They found it anything but easy to cross those streets. The four waited on the curb while the cars flowed past like a river. When suddenly the cars stopped and people pushed past them, Papa Lopez started nervously forward, just as a honking monster leaped at him from around the corner. Back he darted, breathing hard and dragging the others with him. And then, before they had plucked up courage to try again, the line started with a rush and their chance was gone.

Consuelo discovered the secret. "See?" she cried excitedly. "The lights tell us. When the red shines over on that post, we cannot cross. When the green shines, we can—if we look to see that nothing is jumping round the corner."

So they did succeed finally in reaching their new home, a house next to that of Tonio and Candida. The tall buildings dwindled to one- and two-story shops; the store signs began to show Spanish names; black and white and yellow faces mingled with familiar brown ones; there

were streets of little houses in little yards. "And here," announced Papa, "is our *casa*."

The fourth new home! And the nicest one, the children thought. Not very different inside from their other American homes, with its painted woodwork dingy and its wallpaper hanging in strips and yellowed by leaks. No, it was not the inside that was so nice, but the outside. For in front there was a yard. The scant October grass was still green. The three cottonwoods were pure gold.

Best of all, though, was the school. Around the corner and up the block and across the street Tonio and Candida led them to the brick schoolhouse. It was an old schoolhouse, but it was big and very pleasant. The brother and sister stood in an angle of the fence watching the laughing, shouting children playing on swings and teeters and rings: white children, black children, yellow children, and here and there a brown child like themselves.

Inside was the wonder of bells, and marching, and vast halls, and many-windowed rooms with rows and rows of desks, very different from the box-car school. Consuelo found herself in the first grade. Rafael, by reason of his years and previous schooling, was in the second.

All day the strange English language, spoken fast as a railway train, whizzed round their ears. At first they did not try to listen, so interested were they in watching the children rise and speak and sit down in obedience to commands. When they did try, they could catch only now and then a word that they knew. It was unhappy work, and they came home tired and cross that afternoon.

"I will not go again," Rafael declared. "They are crazy. How can I learn when they won't talk a decent language?"

"But the *niños* must go," Tonio's mother told Mama Lopez. "Otherwise the police will come after them!" So of course they went.

The second day was like the first, and the third like the second. The fourth was cold and rainy besides, and Consuelo wept in an agony of homesickness. Teacher patted her bowed head, and told one of the other Mexican children to comfort her. For Teacher herself knew no Spanish, and with thirty-four children to attend to, she could give little time to the unhappy stranger.

It was fine to have Saturday come, with two days when they could stay at home with their own people, and listen and understand, and talk and be understood. On Monday they crept back to school as unwillingly as kittens going into a cage. News awaited them there.

"Teacher says to tell you," Consuelo's Mexican neighbor across the aisle said importantly, "that there is a special room opened for you who do not know English. I am to take you there."

Twenty-five pupils gathered in the special room, almost as scattered in age as those in the box-car school. Nine-year-old Consuelo was the youngest, and there was a boy who was eighteen, and a girl about that same age. The teacher was the only American in the room. Miss Boone was her name, and though she was not at all like Teacher of the box-car, she was nearly as lovely. Her eyes smiled and her mouth smiled; Consuelo thought even her hair smiled. It was red, the color of cows Consuelo had seen on the farm, and it curled so that it seemed like a hundred sunshiny smiles all over her head.

She did smiley things, too. For their first English

lesson, she said "Run!" and seized Consuelo's hand and ran a few steps with her. She said "Window," touching it as she spoke; and then "Run to the window!" and with Consuelo's hand in hers again, she ran to the window. The first thing Consuelo knew, the cold lonesomeness was dropping away from her heart, and she was laughing with excitement and pleasure.

By the end of the second week everything was much better for Consuelo. But Rafael was still having a hard time. When Miss Boone wrote a word on the board and asked him about it he scowled and shook his head. He seemed to do nothing but sprawl in his seat and scowl and shake his head. Yet their work was like play. Miss Boone brought magazines, as Teacher in the box-car had done, and they furnished houses, pasting the furniture pictures on heavy paper. Teacher asked them about the houses where they had lived before.

Here, for the first time, Rafael was interested. With colored crayons he drew a palm-leaf hut, with pig and dogs and Papa and Mama and Consuelo. It was strange about that picture. When you looked at it one way, it was a great deal like the really truly hut and pig and all; when you looked at it another way, it seemed pulled out of shape as in a looking-glass that shows your face too fat. However, Miss Boone was pleased. She smiled at Rafael, and pinned the picture on the wall. Consuelo hoped that would make him happier, but almost the next minute Miss Boone asked about a word on the board, and the old scowl darkened his face.

And then one morning he was not at school. He had started from home, and Consuelo had seen him on the

school grounds. But when the roll was called, he was not in his seat. "I think he will be here *mañana,*" Consuelo said timidly.

He was home for dinner as usual, but again he did not appear in class.

"Why do you stay away?" Consuelo asked him that night.

"I—hate it," Rafael cried, with a sob in his voice. "I can't seem to get ahead. I feel—all wrong."

Consuelo did not know what to do. "But the policeman, Brother," she cried, wringing her hands. "He will put you in jail, maybe, if you do not go. It is only the sick who can stay home."

"Then I will be sick. I certainly feel sick." And next morning he would not get up, but rolled over with his face to the wall and lay there all day. All day Saturday he stayed like this. That was as much as he could stand, and he went wretchedly to school Monday morning.

Consuelo's very braids trembled with sympathy as she watched his unhappy face. Why, her brother felt as sad, as caged and tormented, as she had felt during that first dreadful week. Timidly she raised her hand and went up to Miss Boone's desk.

"Teacher," she whispered, smoothing the frill of Miss Boone's sleeve between small brown fingers, "could I—maybe—sit close beside my brother? Could I—maybe—help him with his lesson?"

Miss Boone sighed. "Rafael doesn't seem to want any help, Consuelo."

"It makes him so—so mad when he doesn't know, that he doesn't want to try any more," the small sister explained eagerly. "If I could make on his paper those let-

ters you make on the board—it's very funny, but Rafael always knows the letters when they are close to him. I don't know why."

Miss Boone looked at her in surprise. "Go back to your seat, dear," she said. "I believe you have shown me a way to help your brother myself."

On Rafael's tablet she drew an *A*.

"Yes, ma'am," said Rafael. "It is *A*."

She went to the board and made another A, large and clear. "And what is this?"

But Rafael, after peering a moment, shook his head.

"Stand up, Rafael, and come up even with Ramon. Now what is the letter?"

"I do not know," he said sullenly.

"Come up close to the board. Now what is the letter?"

Rafael breathed deep. "Why, it is *A*, like the one on my paper," he announced triumphantly.

Miss Boone laid a kind hand on his shoulder. "You haven't been able to see the board at all, have you?" she asked. "Rafael, I am so sorry. We had the eye examination before you came. But it is not too late. Ask your mother if you may go down to the school offices with me this afternoon. There we shall see what can be done."

That was Monday. On Thursday Rafael came to school with big black-rimmed glasses and a face of amazement. More than ever he stumbled that morning. "Everything is where it wasn't," he explained. "It jumps at me."

But when he sat down in his seat he surprised himself and everyone else by shouting aloud: "The letters on the board—they are as plain as when they are on my tablet!"

REFUGIO MARIE

BOTH Rafael and Consuelo were happy now. You would have thought Rafael's glasses magic ones that changed the whole boy. "They are magic," his sister said. "American magic, like that in the fairy tales. Rafael doesn't stumble and fall any more. He doesn't scowl. He learns as fast as I do, almost. And he draws pictures better than anyone else in Special Room."

Yes, Rafael's crossness and his clumsiness had come because he could not see well. It was true also that, seeing clearly, he drew beautifully, so beautifully that the principal promised he should have special training.

Special Room grew more and more delightful. It was like a big family, older and younger brothers and sisters working and playing together. Because it was so much like home, the girls brought geraniums for the windows and made curtains. They kept the floor so clean that the janitor found little to do there, and all around the wall were the best of their pictures and posters.

There were almost no unhappy moments at school as fall drew into winter. But at home, Papa and Mama were beginning to look sober. It was money that troubled them—something they had troubled little about in the homeland. The wages Papa had received when he worked there were small, but small also was the cost of food; a few cents would feed the whole family for a day. In America it was very different. When Papa Lopez received his pay for the summer's work it looked so big

that he thought it would last a year. But very soon they learned how much it costs to live in the United States. Rent and clothing, coal and groceries, were fast melting the money pile that had looked so large.

"Candida's mama buys her cornmeal at a store up the street where it is cheaper," Mama told Consuelo one Saturday. "Maybe you'd better go buy a sack. Maybe Candida will show you the way."

Candida was helping her mother with the washing, but she could tell Consuelo the way, yes, surely. "One, two, three streets this way; then across the corner that way, and one street and half a street, and in where the letters on the window say 'Casteñada.'"

One, two, three streets this way went Consuelo, then across the corner that way, and one street and—

Just then, about to toddle out alone on to the pavement ahead of her, she saw a baby not more than two years old, crying as it went. Darting forward, Consuelo drew it back from the curbing, and crouched on the walk beside it.

"There, there," she crooned, circling it with her arms. "There, there! Where is your *casa?* And your mama?" But the baby only sniffled and shook its head.

It was a ragged baby—oh, very! It was a dirty baby—dirtier, Consuelo thought, than almost any she had ever seen. But it was a sweet baby, under all the dirt; its eyes were black pansies like Consuelo's own, and its hair was a wavy black cap. And when it whimpered "Hungry" it whimpered it in Spanish—*"Hambre."*

Consuelo picked it up and looked around her. To the nearest door she trudged and rapped timidly. "Is this your baby?" she asked.

"No, poor little thing! I never saw it before. You might ask the people next door; they've lived here longer than we have."

Consuelo took a firmer hold on the baby and trudged to the next house. "No," said the woman, "but I know where it does belong. You see the house across the street and next the corner? Well, behind it is a shed where an old woman lives. That's where the baby belongs, poor *niña.*"

Smiling *"Muchas gracias,"* Consuelo lifted the baby higher in her arms and went on. Alas, as she reached the house next the corner a great yellow dog came running through the yard, barking angrily. Consuelo shrank back in terror. People were passing busily, but no one noticed the two children, and she was too timid to ask help.

The baby dug dirty fists into its eyes and cried. This would never do. She really must get the tired, hungry little thing home; it was cold, too; it wore no coat, and its dimpled knees were bare to the sharp December air. Mama Lopez would be worrying, besides. Consuelo grasped the latch.

"Grrrrr!" said the dog.

"Nice doggie," trembled Consuelo.

Just then, to her relief, a woman appeared at the door. "Come along in," she said crossly. "The dog won't hurt you. Nero, be quiet."

Still trembling, Consuelo opened the gate and, holding the baby tight, scurried past the dog. Around the house and across a dirty yard, and to the tumbledown shed. There she set the baby down while she tapped at the rickety door.

"Pasa por dentro—Come in," said a faint voice.

An old, old woman was lying on an uncomfortable bed. She tried to smile when she saw them.

"Bad *niña!*" she reproved the child, but gently. "You must not run away when Mama Nita cannot get up to find you."

"It is your baby?"

"Not mine, no. A little orphan who was left here. Of course I have done for it what I could. Our people always do. But now, I know not. I am too sick to care for it, and there is no food. Perhaps we must send for the police to take it where it will be looked after. The woman out in front, here—she is not of our people—she has a heart of stone."

"But not the police!" cried Consuelo, hugging the baby close. "The *niña* is so sweet. What is her name?"

"Refugio Marie."

"Refugio! It is my mother's name! Me, I will take her home to my mother. Shall I?"

"First let me hold her a minute," consented the old woman, and when Consuelo put the baby beside her she caressed it with trembling hands and kissed it long and tenderly.

Then Consuelo went out the door again with Refugio Marie, around the house and through the gate, the yellow dog growling his farewell.

"Put your arms round Consuelo's neck—so!" she told the child. "You are very big for such a little baby. Now we must go first up one street."

So up one street she went, and stood on the corner looking in bewilderment from one side to the other. Everything was perfectly strange. "We will go *this* way for one street," she decided, "and then perhaps it will be

the place where we have to go *that* way for three streets. But first maybe we'd better find the store and get the cornmeal for Mama. You will like *tortillas,* Refugio Marie?"

She set the child down carefully, and reached into her pocket for the rag with a quarter tied in the corner. It was not there. Frantically she felt down her neck. It was not there. She walked back along the street, watching the pavement. It was not there. She swallowed a lump in her throat. "Anyway," she comforted, "you'll like *frijoles,* won't you, Refugio Marie? I guess there's nothing to do but go home."

That was all very well, but where was home? Up this street she went and down that one, and everything grew more and more strange. Her back ached under the weight of the heavy baby. She tried leading her by the hand, but the tired little creature only sat down flat on the walk and roared. Consuelo sighed and boosted her with difficulty to her shoulder. The baby's little hands were purply-red with cold, and she was growing chilly herself. Yet nowhere was there any sign of home.

"I don't know what will happen to us, Refugio Marie," she said, lifting the heavy weight higher for the dozenth time, "if our street doesn't come pretty soon. It seems as if there isn't anyone we know in all these thousands of people." And just then, as she passed an old brick house, she heard a sound that made her pause hopefully.

The house looked no different from the others, except that the windows were a bit more shining and the curtains a snowier white. It was the sound that was so different. It was the singing of children's voices, and the

tune was one that Consuelo knew, "Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head."

A smile blossomed on Consuelo's tired face. "It's all right, Refugio Marie," she told the baby in her mothering voice. "Maybe it's the box-car teacher herself; but anyway, it's somebody that will show us the way home." And she trudged confidently up the walk and set Refugio Marie down while she tapped at the door.

The door opened. Someone gentle and kind smiled down at her. Everything was indeed all right! Led by the Christmas song the children were practising, Consuelo had come to the Mexican mission; and it was the Missionary Señorita who lifted the baby from Consuelo's numb arms and took them both into the warm bright room.

There was water and soap. There was food. There was the glowing comfort of a stove. There was gay paper on the walls, bright blue paint on the woodwork, chairs of all colors of the rainbow. While Refugio Marie slept, nestled happily in a cushioned chair, Consuelo looked about her with delighted wonder, and the Missionary Señorita, after questioning her in dear familiar Spanish, made herself busy at the telephone.

In no time at all she had found out where the Lopez family lived, and was hurrying through darkening streets, carrying the warmly wrapped baby while Consuelo clung to a fold of her coat.

"Why, this," crowed Consuelo with a hop and skip, "is my own block!"

Mama Lopez was at the gate, peering anxiously up the

street. She clasped Consuelo close, scolding and petting at once. Then she bowed politely to the Missionary Señorita.

"Enter, Señorita," she begged, "my house is yours."

"I will come another day," smiled the Missionary Señorita, holding out the cozy little bundle of Refugio Marie. "Your baby is fast asleep. Just leave the wraps around her. I don't need them."

Mama Lopez backed away from the bundle in surprise. "It is a mistake," she said. "I have no baby."

"Oh, but yes, *Mamacita!*" Consuelo assured her. "You have a baby—a brand-new one, though very big and heavy. I found her for you myself."

At exactly the right moment Refugio Marie woke and whimpered softly. When Mama Lopez stretched out half-unwilling arms, the sleepy thing cuddled down in them with a sigh of content that made Mama hug her close. And so Refugio Marie stayed.

FIESTAS AND SLIPPERS

AFTER everything was explained, the Lopez family decided to adopt Refugio Marie for their own. So Consuelo's adventure made six people happy: Mama Nita, because she was taken to a sunny hospital ward; Refugio Marie, because she had love and care in a real home; and the Lopezes, because, as Mama Lopez said, "a house is empty without a baby."

Of course it was another little mouth to feed and another little body to clothe. When Papa Lopez heard of work in a mine not far away, therefore, he went at once to earn money to last till beet season. Rafael and Consuelo missed the kind father, but they would have missed him more keenly if it had not been for the new interests that had come into their lives—Refugio Marie and the mission.

Almost every week they went to the mission. It was even better than Special Room. On Saturday morning there was sewing class for the girls. On Saturday afternoon there were stories and games. On Sunday there was Sunday school, with more stories and songs and pictures. Consuelo loved to bring Refugio Marie, all polished and shining. She loved to sit in one of the rainbow chairs in the circle with the baby on her lap. Even Mama Lopez came when they had the Christmas fiesta, which was beautiful with songs and colored lights and gifts.

Thus the winter passed, and so quickly that Special

Room was near its end before the children could believe it. They had all learned English so rapidly that February found them ready for their regular grades. The parting from Miss Boone and their classmates and the homelike room was sad. Consuelo cried again. Yet both children were proud, for Consuelo was to go into the third grade, and Rafael into the fourth.

They entered their new rooms at a pleasant time for Rafael. All year Grade Four had been studying American Indians. On the wall were pictures of them. In the sand-box were models of Crow tepee and Navajo hogan. In the corner cupboard were beaded moccasins and woven baskets. And now they were learning about Mexican Indians, and building a tiny palm-leaf hut.

"And they are to have a Mexican *fiesta,*" Rafael told Mama and Consuelo excitedly, "to show the children what Mexican people do at home."

"That seems a foolishness," observed Mama. "Mexican people at home do things the regular way. I should think everyone would know about that."

"But, *Mamacita,* in all our room are only six Mexicans; and three of those have been so long away that they do not remember how things are rightly done. Black children we have, with hair very curly, and a Chinese boy; the rest are Americans."

"Candida has brought a *metate,*" Rafael reported next day. "Her mama does not need it, since she buys the meal already ground."

"But not so good as what we rub out by hand on the stone of our forefathers," complained Mama Lopez.

"None of the children know how to make the *tortillas,*" Rafael went on. "We wanted *tortillas* for our feast."

"Consuelo, she could bake them," said Mama.

Rafael's eyes snapped with eagerness. "I will tell them. Perhaps they will ask her."

It was a proud Consuelo that appeared at the door of Grade Four on *fiesta* day. She was giggling, because Mama had dressed her as nearly as possible in the style of their homeland, and the little girl had grown used to clothes so different that she felt awkward in the long slim skirt and *rebozo*.

The March day was bright and mild, and Grade Four was allowed to have part of its *fiesta* outdoors. Mama Lopez had soaked corn kernels in lime water, just as she used to do; and it was these soft, damp grains, somewhat like hominy, that Consuelo put on the three-legged *metate* and rubbed with the stone rolling-pin. A fire was built between three stones, and a sheet of iron laid over it to heat. On the hot iron Consuelo baked the large round cakes of cornmeal until they were beginning to brown, and no longer. There were Mexican *frijoles* to eat with them. And to top off the meal, Teacher had given them a square of guava jelly apiece, jelly so firm that you could eat it with your fingers—one of the favorite Mexican *dulces*.

When they had eaten they went into the schoolroom, and again Consuelo was the center of attention. She had brought a piece of her mother's drawnwork and one of her own, and Teacher held them admiringly for all to see. "Is there any American girl here who could do half so well?" she asked. Consuelo blushed with pleasure.

"And her brother's fingers can make fine things, too," the teacher told them. In the very center of the front blackboard Rafael had drawn a colored picture of the

palm-leaf hut and the pig and the dog and the Lopez family. Whichever way you looked at it, the picture looked beautiful and real.

To wind up the afternoon, stories of Mexico were told. It was a splendid day, and all the Mexicans were prouder than ever of their homeland.

Grade Three had no *fiesta,* but they had something almost as good. All year they had studied about children in lands across the sea. They had built their houses in the sand-box, and made paper-dolls with the right costumes: Japanese, Chinese, Indian-of-India, African, Hollander, French. There was a real Japanese in their room, and there were several descendants of Africans, and now they wished for a Holland girl with long yellow braids and sea-blue eyes. They would treat her so kindly, they thought, and make her feel happy and at home.

When there really came another child from across the sea, they seemed to forget. Little Sophie was a Russian Jewess whose people were very poor indeed. In her one-room home there were no bathtubs and shiny washbowls, no fragrant soap and fluffy towels to make it easy and pleasant to be clean. So when Room Three had physical inspection, Sophie had an unhappy time.

Do you have physical inspection in your school? The first thing in the morning Room Three stood up, and the health monitor stood in front and bowed to them. "Have you washed your hands and face? Have you cleaned your fingernails?" It was like a song, and the health monitor teetered on his toes and chanted it. "Have you brushed your teeth? Have you combed your hair? Are your shoes and stockings neat? Did you bring a clean handkerchief?" When the monitor had asked those ques-

tions, a small policeman stepped out of each row and sternly inspected the children of his district, one by one.

Poor Sophie! She guessed quickly what they meant, and she locked her lips together and hung her head and clasped her hands behind her back. Three seats back, Consuelo was watching her. Well she remembered her own troubles when she had entered Special Room. Up went her brown hand—a pretty clean hand now—and softly she whispered in Teacher's ear, "Can't I, please, help the new girl from across the sea?"

Teacher nodded, and Consuelo tucked the soiled hand in her own and led the new girl to the lavatory. There she rolled up her sleeves and went to work, and when at length they came in the door of Room Three, both were breathless and shining. After that, Sophie followed Consuelo like a shadow, and Consuelo was happier than ever before. Every morning she looked her new friend over carefully before physical inspection.

"Your shoes," she mused one day, "they need to be made neat. And mine also," she added quickly. "The button is off your slipper so it goes flippity-floppity. And your slippers do not shine. Nor mine either." Thoughtfully she looked around and pounced on a bit of string. With it she tied the strap. The polishing was harder, but she found a way to manage that, too. When she was through, her shoes and Sophie's looked black and shining. Then they ran off to play.

They both stood happily before the health policeman, quite sure that they were clean and neat. He nodded and smiled at Sophie's smooth hair, at her face, at her teeth, at the square of cloth that was her clean handkerchief; but at her feet he pointed an accusing finger.

Sophie looked at her shoes, and Consuelo looked at hers, and they gave two gasps of surprise. Their shoes were coated with schoolground sand as a cake is coated with frosting.

Consuelo's hand shot up. "Teacher! Teacher! We polished those shoes as shiny as anything! Just before the bell rang we polished them."

"Where did you get polish at school, Consuelo?"

"It wasn't really polish," explained Consuelo, "it was a piece of sandwich. Somebody left it from lunch yesterday. So I just took the butter and buttered the shoes."

EMPTY STOMACHS

MEANWHILE life was not easy in the Lopez household. The grocer frowned so darkly over his unpaid bill that Consuelo and Rafael took turns going timidly after their beans and cornmeal. *Tortillas* and *frijoles* were their only food nowadays, as they had often been in the past, with a piece of meat to flavor the bean stew twice a week, then once a week, then not at all. All the *tortillas* and *frijoles* they wanted; almost as much as they wanted; much less than they wanted.

Then, when the rent was four months overdue, the landlord told them to move.

"But Papa will come soon with the money," explained Rafael. "And where would we go, Mister?"

"The shack on the back of the lot is empty. Live there if you like," he offered.

Consuelo thought of Mama Nita, the shack was so like the one where she had found her that December day. "What is to be will be," Mama Lopez said patiently, and without complaint she moved her family into this fifth new home.

It had probably been built for a henhouse, but it was so tumbledown that even hens wouldn't have been comfortable in it now. A stove propped up with bricks, a chair that sagged to one side, a rickety bed—these were the complete furnishings. The Lopezes were not used to much furniture, and they did not mind that, except on bad days when they could not get outdoors. Then there

was nothing at all to do but sit on the rough floor and gaze at the bare ugliness.

"It is well that summer will soon come," shivered Mama, when bleak winds and rain drove through the cracks.

"It is a very ragged *casa,*" Consuelo commented, "but papering the walls and roof with the many layers of newspapers, that keeps out much of the chill. If only our baby does not take a sickness. And if only the Papa comes home."

For that was by far the greatest trouble. Papa Lopez had gone in December. It was April now, and neither word nor money had come from him. It was as if he had completely disappeared.

"I pray that he may come back. Every night I pray it," Rafael comforted his mother one day. "The Missionary Señorita tells us God hears what we ask; and I think he is watching over my father and will bring him safe home."

Rafael went to school that day much happier in this belief, though his dish of *frijoles* had been so small, with so much water and so few beans, that he felt flat as a doll with the sawdust out. And he was very sympathetic when the teacher asked them that afternoon if they had extra food and clothing they could bring for a poor family in their neighborhood. He knew what it was to have your feet creeping through your shoes; how it felt to grow a little hungrier every day.

Up went one hand after another. "I can bring shoes I've outgrown." "I'll bring cornmeal." "I'll take a quarter out of my bank."

Rafael slouched low in his seat and dug his hands into

his pockets. If he could only offer with the rest! If he had even a penny!

The boy across the aisle was staring at him unpleasantly. He was the boy with the whole quarter to give. "Stingy," he whispered, glancing to see that the teacher was not watching, "stingy Mex."

Rafael's dark eyes flashed and his fists clenched angrily.

"Rafael!" Teacher spoke sharply. "What does this mean?"

Candida waved her hand wildly. "Jimmy, he say something—something not nice!"

"What did you say, Jimmy?"

Jimmy scowled at his desk, and Candida signaled again. "He say 'Stingy Mex.' Just like that: 'Stingy Mex!' because Rafael he not give anything to the poor people."

"They are stingy," mumbled Jimmy. "I wish they'd all go back into the Mexican room and leave us Americans alone."

Rafael doubled his fists again. "You call me Mex and I fight you!" he shouted.

"Rafael," Teacher interrupted, "quiet! Why shouldn't he call you Mexican? Are you ashamed of it?"

"Not ashamed of being Mexican," Rafael muttered. "It is the way they say it that makes me ashamed."

"If you'd read the Mexican history I've been reading, I think you'd be proud," Teacher went on. "The Spanish were surprised when they came across the sea to find what beautiful things the Mexicans could make, how splendid their palaces were, and how fine their homes. And they built great floating gardens, just as Rafael once said, where flowers and vegetables grew splendidly

in the rich earth from the bed of the stream; and though the gardens have grown to the bottom now, so that they can no longer be rowed about, they are still beautiful. People bring boatloads of flowers from them to the markets. It is a beautiful land. There are parts so high that they are always cool, and parts desert, and parts hot, where oranges and bananas grow, and flowers bloom all the year round; and there are splendid birds, and animals different from any we have here."

Proudly Rafael told Mama and Consuelo about it that evening.

"And I, too, have something to tell," said Mama Lopez.

"Oh, Mama, tell us quick!"

"The Missionary Señorita and you children are invited to dinner with the Señora-who-tells-stories. Tomorrow."

With the dawn of tomorrow, preparations began. Mama Lopez washed and ironed Rafael's best shirt and overalls, and Consuelo's best dress, which was blue calico, "but a too plain dress for going visiting." Mama's eyes grew thoughtful, and then delightedly she brought out a piece of lace curtain which she had found in the other house when they moved there. "Just right for trimming," she cried. So, clean and starched, it formed a collar for the blue calico, and made Consuelo both proud and scratchy. But alas, one cannot trim overalls with a lace curtain!

Long before the appointed hour they were waiting primly in the Missionary Señorita's hall. Promptly on time the automobile of the Señora-who-tells-stories rolled up to the mission door, and the children, delighted and frightened, climbed in and sat on the edge of the seat as the car purred away.

In the next few minutes they saw a Denver they had not dreamed of: a great park with wide lawns and arching trees growing faintly green. "There will be flowers soon," the Missionary Señorita told them. Beyond the park they rolled along wide avenues where fine houses were set in great, beautiful yards. The children's eyes grew round and rounder. They could hardly find their tongues to answer when they were spoken to.

The automobile stopped at a pleasant home—the sort of home many of us live in, I suppose—and the Señora-who-tells-stories led them in. Inside they stood staring, unable to move, while the Missionary Señorita took off their hats and coats.

"A beautiful *casa,*" said Consuelo. "See the wall, how bright and clean. And the floor, shiny as a looking glass. I like your house."

Wider still popped their eyes as they came into the living-room, with more kinds of furniture than they had ever seen.

"But who lives in *this* house?"

"Why, the Señora-who-tells-stories, and her husband and son."

"Two separate *casas* for people so few!" marveled Rafael.

"And now perhaps Consuelo would like to come out to my kitchen," invited the Señora, "while the Missionary Señorita shows Rafael a book of pictures."

Consuelo followed with shy delight. "But—who lives *here?*" she gasped. Blue floors—yellow walls—snowy curtains—silver-bright faucets—glistening white stove! With eyes that widened alarmingly she watched the final preparations for dinner in the gay little room. Un-

dreamed-of things happened. Potatoes were whipped to a white fluff and gilded with butter; vegetables were browned and seasoned; from the oven was drawn a roast of meat that crackled and steamed. The fragrance made Consuelo almost ill with hunger.

The Señora-who-tells-stories opened another door. "Will you carry in the potatoes, dear?" she asked.

Carrying the dish with fearful care, she stood stock-still in the entrance.

"But—but who lives *here?*" she gasped. "How can three people live in so many *casas* at once?"

The varieties of food were quite as bewildering. "One, two, three, four—" she counted aloud.

"Put the dish down, little one," the Señora said gently.

While the two children stared wonderingly, the others bowed their heads and the Señor asked the blessing. And then their plates were heaped high with steaming food.

The children had never tasted "foreign food" before, except for a bite or two at the mission; but they were too hungry to question. Their plates were emptied, filled, emptied. *Dulces* followed, cold and delicious, with rich cake accompanying them. A second time the cake was passed. Eagerly Consuelo took one of the richly frosted slices and started to bite into it. Then she slowly laid it down.

"May I take it home to Mama Lopez?" she asked timidly, turning her eyes from one lady to the other.

Rafael paused with his own piece half way to his mouth. "I will take mine to Refugio Marie," he said.

When at last they rose from the table, Consuelo spread her handkerchief carefully on the seat of her chair and laid the piece of cake in it. The cake was not alone on

the clean cotton: there was potato, crackling brown meat, buttered bread.

"Why, my dear!" said the Missionary Señorita.

Consuelo lifted frightened eyes. "Was it wrong?" she whispered anxiously. "It is only what they gave me for myself. I—I take it to *Mamacita* and the *niña*. There was nothing left tonight but bean soup—without any beans."

THUS for the first time the Missionary Señorita learned of the troubled state of the Lopez affairs. At once she took a kindly hand in them.

"Why didn't you tell me?" she asked Mama Lopez. "Am I not your friend? Would you let a friend go hungry while you had food in the *casa?*"

Mama Lopez took the Missionary Señorita's hand and laid it against her cheek. "But my people, we do not beg!" she said gently.

"Denver itself would have taken care of you until your husband could be located," the Señorita went on. "We have a community chest for just such purposes, so that the whole city may be a friend to those who need one."

"But that I did not know. I did not understand this America."

"Just now the first thing is to try to get in touch with Mr. Lopez," said the Señorita, "so I am writing to the pastor of the church in the place where he planned to go."

Mama Lopez had small hope of hearing good news. But she was at least comforted by plenty of food for the three children and herself, and by fuel to warm them in the chill spring days.

She was surprised when news really came. The pastor in the little mining town had at once set about finding the missing man, and had been almost immediately successful. Papa Lopez, seriously injured in an accident in a mine, had lain unconscious for weeks in the hospital, unable to

hear or speak. But now he was beginning to get well, and that very day had been able to ask his first question about his family.

It was mid-May when he returned to Denver, still pale and weak, but on the road to health again. The Missionary Señorita gave him light work in the mission garden; eagerly he turned the soil and sowed the seed. "And I have never seen the garden make so beautiful a start," said the Missionary Señorita. Mama Lopez was helping with the washing and ironing. Rafael and Consuelo made themselves useful in all sorts of ways. The community chest was a helping hand. Everything about the little family seemed to be taking on new life.

Few happier groups could be found than the five of them as they sat in the mission pew on Sundays. Papa Lopez was stronger; Mama Lopez looked ten years younger, now that the anxiety had slipped from her shoulders; Rafael, Consuelo, and the baby Refugio began to grow plump and rosy.

School was pleasanter and lessons easier (for it is hard to study when you are always hungry), and both Rafael and Consuelo were sorry to have vacation drawing near.

Before vacation came, an interesting thing happened. The year before, Teacher told them, the children of America had sent messengers of friendship, called friendship dolls, to the children of Japan. This year they were to send friendship messages to the children of Mexico. And because Mexico was working so earnestly to give fine schools to all its children—schools like the wonderful school Rafael and Consuelo had visited so long ago—they had chosen to send schoolbags containing little gifts.

Splendid school-bags they were, of leatherette embossed

in silver and gold, with a picture of happy children and words of good-will and friendship. In each was a set of cards with pictures of the great men and beautiful scenery of Mexico and America, and, last but not least, of Lindbergh, loved by Mexican children as well as American, and of Carranza, the brave Mexican flier who lost his life in our country when he was flying back to Mexico. Other pleasant gifts were pencils and tablets, erasers and crayons, sweet-smelling soap, games, and garden seeds.

Several of the rooms in the old brick school were going to send bags, and Room Three and Room Four were among them. Consuelo and Rafael tried to imagine what sort of boys or girls would receive their bags; where they would be living; what kind of schools they would be attending. Perhaps one of them would live in a palm hut like their own and have nothing more than the kind of school they used to go to. Perhaps they would live in the damp, crowded basements of the city houses, and go to city schools not so very different from those in America. Perhaps they would live in village adobes and go to one of the fine new rural schools where there were gardens and beehives and even chickens to be learned about as part of the lessons.

How the brother and sister longed to have a share in those bags! They ran errands whenever there were errands to run; it seemed to be the only way they could earn pennies. At length Consuelo had collected enough to buy a doll at the ten-cent store, a cunning soap baby with a wash-cloth blanket. Rafael proudly purchased a tablet of fine smooth paper. On the front sheet he drew a picture; a boy with a flag in each hand—the

Mexican flag with its cactus and serpent and eagle, and the Stars and Stripes. "To a Mexican schoolboy," he printed in clear neat letters, "from your—"

"Shall I say from your American friend?" he asked the teacher.

"Say Spanish-American," prompted Candida.

"No," said Rafael while he lettered, "this is what I really am—'your Mexican-American friend, Rafael Lopez!' For Mexico," he explained, "is my mother-land, and you can have but one mother. But this America, she adopt me, and she give me much—much."

America was not through giving to the Lopezes, and one of her biggest gifts came by way of their old friends the flowers, and their greatest friend, the mission.

Papa Lopez had managed to find room in the mission garden for a plot of gladioli and a few dahlias, besides the row of sweet peas along the fence and the pansies in the window-boxes and the nasturtiums at all the edges. Occasionally now he found an odd job that his increasing strength permitted, but every spare moment was devoted to the beloved flowers. They throve as flowers often do when you love them; great glowing heavy-headed dahlias, flaming nasturtiums, velvet pansies, butterfly sweet peas.

While Papa Lopez was working among the flowers on a July evening, with Rafael helping at his side, a car drew up to the curb and a man stepped out and spoke to him. He spoke English, and the English of Papa Lopez was still slight. Rafael, however, was able to interpret. The caller, it seemed, had long watched Papa Lopez and the mission flowers as he drove past, and now he had come to offer him a position with more work and more

money. It took Papa and Rafael some little time to understand what the position was; for this stranger seemed to be offering them wages for merely doing the pleasantest thing in the world—caring for a garden of flowers.

Out at the edge of town the stranger had a farm for just that one thing—the growing of flowers. And among the flowers was a nice little house where the Lopez family could live. And not too far from the house was a good school, where the children could go in the fall. Even in fall and winter, he assured them, there would be work for Papa Lopez.

It seemed almost too good to be true. Yet before July had passed, the whole family had been moved to this sixth new home. And there we shall bid them good-by on a bright Sunday in August.

The sky is smiling, and the far-away mountains seem smiling, too. Near at hand are acres on acres of dahlias, taller than Papa Lopez, and of every shade, from white to deepest red, from yellow to flame, shell-pink, rose, lavender. From a fence post rings a meadow-lark's song. Overhead shrills the swift flight of a humming-bird.

Almost among the dahlia rows stands a cottage, trimly white and green, and gay with hollyhocks and roses. From its front door comes a happy-eyed Mama Lopez, with Refugio Marie's chubby hand in hers. Consuelo and Rafael follow, and I think you would scarcely know them, they are so plump and so rosy.

Out through the flowers they go, to the road where Papa Lopez is waiting. On the street-car they climb, and a few minutes later they are entering the mission. For the mission, Consuelo will tell you, was the door through which they really discovered America.

BACKGROUND NOTES

"Palm Hut and Shouting School"

The topography of Mexico permits the rapid passage by train from one zone to another, with consequent swift changes in temperature and vegetation. There are three distinct zones. The hot zone, with an annual mean temperature between 76° and 88°, is the lowland region along the coasts. The temperate zone lies along the mountain slopes and lower plateaus, and its annual temperature range is 65° to 76°. The cold district includes the high plateaus and mountains, between 6500 and 12,500 feet in altitude, and its mean temperature is 30° to 64°. These zones divide the country roughly into thirds, with half the population in the cold zone, and a quarter each in the hot and temperate zones. It is not so much the heat that induces the lassitude of the masses, as the great humidity in the wet season, and the extreme lack of it in the dry, together with an absence of those variations of temperature that seem to produce vigor and nervous energy.

The make-up of the population of Mexico is as interesting as the topography. In a population of perhaps fourteen millions, two millions are pure-blooded Indians, about eight millions are *mestizos* or mixed-bloods, and four millions are white or tending strongly toward the white. The Mexican Indians are of various tribal strains, and represent the survival of a former high state of culture. Despite the tragic effects of the Conquest, they are today the people through whom many friends of Mexico expect the national development to come. Not only their temperament but their religion and language are stamped with the Spanish Conquest. Of the language, however, it has been estimated that perhaps six million Indians, using a number of different dialects, do not speak Spanish at all.

The type of native house varies with zone and tribe. Among the peons, the lower class, it ranges from the adobe with tile roof or thatch, to the palm hut, sometimes chinked with mud; the still scantier shelter of boughs or reeds; and the cave-like dugout. Most of these humble dwellings have features in common. The poorer of them seldom have more than one room; the floor is of dirt or hard adobe clay; there are no windows or chimneys, and there is often only one door. A camp stove such as is described in this chapter is used, or a sort of brazier for charcoal. In the better homes a brick stove is built into the kitchen, with rectangular openings in which fires may be built, and over which cooking-vessels may be placed. In the peon homes tallow dips are used for lights. In some parts of the country the only beds are the woven reed or fiber mats, or *petates,* while in others rough cots are used, and in still others, thick, delightfully soft mattresses of grass. Often the only other article of furniture is the *metate* on which the meal is ground, a three-legged stone stool with one leg very short so that the hollowed top is inclined.

In some of the cities the houses, built in unbroken walls along the street, have two stories, the upper of which is inhabited by the well-to-do, and the ground floor by the poor, who have usually no windows and damp tile floors—small comfort indeed. In other parts of the country this arrangement is unknown. The life of the upper classes is separated from that of the peon by a wide gulf, the culture of the former being decidedly European, while their next neighbors remain most primitive.

The great food staples of the masses are corn and beans, with peppers as condiments to make the monotony of the fare endurable. *Tortillas* are made of a meal ground from corn kernels soaked in lime water; the lime water is the only seasoning used in mixing them, and no leavening is employed. Beans in various forms, especially in stew with a little meat for flavor, rank with corn as an invariable article of diet. *Tamales,* so often spoken of, are more of a treat than a staple. Strong coffee, tea brewed from different leaves, and

pulque, the juice of the *maguey* (highly intoxicating when fermented), are favorite drinks. Among the upper classes, chocolate is much used, spiced with cinnamon, flavored with vanilla, and beaten so thick as to be eaten rather than drunk, quite as in pre-Conquest days. Desserts are usually sweet and, to our taste, insipid: stiff jellies, pastes, custards. Much candy is eaten by all classes, and in most sections fruit is eaten between meals, though not at the table. Vegetables hold very small place in the dietary, though squash is rather common, and the tomato is much used in making pastes and sauces. While the upper classes enjoy a wide variety of foods, the menu of the peon is chiefly an endless repetition of *tortillas* and bean stew, with only slight variations. However, it must always be borne in mind that conditions in various sections differ greatly, and there are large ranches or *haciendas* on which the peons are far better housed and fed than their brothers in general.

There are also wide sectional and tribal differences in the type of clothing. The usual garb in the district south of Puebla has been sufficiently described in the story. The formerly inevitable masculine peon costume of white cotton coat and trousers is giving place to jeans and other materials, but is still strongly predominant. The peon woman still wears the blue cotton *rebozo,* and the man his *sarape,* either with or without the opening cut for the head. Shoes are still a mark of caste, the lowest wearing none at all; the next, sandals which are mere leather soles with straps or ties; and the highest, real shoes.

The schools of Mexico are making enormous strides under the present administration, yet many "shouting schools" still exist. However, it should be noted that Mexico is making significant experiments in her school system, well worth the notice of other nations. The new model rural schools are particularly interesting. They are simple buildings, in some cases partly built by the pupils themselves, who thus acquire a sense of proud proprietorship. They are surrounded with flower and vegetable gardens, and have equipment for the raising of poultry, rabbits, and bees. The cooking and eat-

ing of vegetables is another vital course in the curriculum, and the prime endeavor of these schools is to adapt the coming Mexican citizen to native conditions in such a way as to give him the fullest and most progressive life.

The buildings and the teaching force are stretched to cover night school for adults. It must be a picturesque scene, one of those evening schools; in some of the cases reported, each pupil brings his own candle and sets it on his desk, and the flickering light of those many tapers may be regarded as symbolical. Another noteworthy project is the cultural mission. Each mission is composed of a group of specialists: teacher, agriculturist, home economics expert, and physical culturist, for example. They go into a zone or district and gather into a rural school the fifty or more teachers of the district, and with them hold a three-weeks' institute, helping them to see and solve their own problems. Six of these missions held forty-two institutes in eleven different states during 1927, reaching more than twenty-five hundred teachers.

The Sub-Secretary of the Department of Education says: "We are not interested in school routine especially; traditional questions of method and technique are of secondary importance; but we are tremendously interested in having a school that will contribute towards social organization and national unity. It is a far cry . . . from the narrow restricted life of the traditional school to this natural, real community of children and teacher, where to raise a chicken is as important an enterprise as to learn a poem."

Even now only about a quarter of the population of Mexico can read and write at all, and only a third of the children are in school.

"Railway Trains"

A peon's wages may be as low as twenty-five cents a day, although part of his living may be found on the *hacienda.* Children are many, working time is much broken by illness, and the laborer is kept in a state of poverty almost hopeless. It is only recently that there has been any encouragement to saving, and that through the new schools. On the other hand,

there are plenty of protected lotteries to coax away the needed coins.

The wages promised by American employers are tempting to the debt-ridden peon, and he comes to this country in vast numbers, his transportation often covered by his employer. The housing conditions he finds here are often deplorable. In one border city he is crowded into "corrals" a hundred feet long, where seventeen huts on each side face each other across a filthy court. Many of the larger businesses, the sugar companies and mines in particular, are waking to the situation and putting up clean and comfortable quarters for these employees.

"The Box-Car Christmas"

The Christmas customs of Mexico are picturesque and often very beautiful. The *piñata* seems to be nearly universal, though the details vary. The following is a description of the celebration as carried out in some districts.

During December, small banks are kept in a convenient place in each household, and extra coins deposited there. Thirty or forty families combine to provide a Christmas Eve feast, pooling the contents of their banks to buy a gift for each person to be present. After the feast these gifts, all fastened together in *piñatas,* paper-wrapped bundles, are fastened to the ceiling. The children are blindfolded and given sticks with which they attempt to strike the *piñatas,* which are finally broken and shower down their gifts. At midnight the bells ring and the people go to church. In other parts of the country, the *piñata* is the hollow clay image described in the story, with gay paper trimmings outside, and toys and candy and nuts inside. Some of the images are elaborate and costly—full-rigged ships and animals and persons.

Very elaborate miniature representations of the Nativity are arranged. Sometimes broad shelves are constructed on three sides of a room, and decked with moss and tinsel. The place of honor is reserved for the scene of the Nativity itself, and on the other shelves Old Testament stories are pictured. As a part of the celebration of Christmas Eve, grown people

and children go from door to door in the house, seeking *posada* (night's lodging) for Mary and Joseph. Finally entrance is granted them, in the room where the *nacimiento* is arranged, and the figure of the Christ Child is laid in the waiting manger.

The ceremonial is far more elaborate than the box-car adaptation could be, often with dazzling angel costumes, brilliant lighting effects, and fine music. A real group of Mexican children and parents responded most delightedly to a box-car school Christmas with the tree and decorations as described here.

"The Beet Fields"

The floating gardens are probably known to most people. Built supposedly on light basket-rafts of bamboo and reed, in pre-Conquest days, they could be poled along the waterways, and were a most ingenious and beautiful device. They have long since become stationary, collecting sediment beneath and around their original structure, and rooting themselves along the banks. They are now vast beds of gorgeous blossoms, traversed by lily-patterned canals passable to the native canoes, which come to the markets laden with sheer beauty. The Mexican love of flowers has been observed from the time of Cortez to the present. The poorest peon will buy flowers in the market or grow them in his dooryard.

"Special-Room Magic"

Public school teachers speak in praise of the Mexican child, and seem to feel that as a student he ranks high, when one takes into consideration the irregularity of his schooling. Generally speaking, he starts school late in the fall and is taken out early in the spring, since he is an economic factor in the beet fields, or must go there when the rest of the family goes.

Teachers I have talked with stress the Mexicans' love of beauty, especially of color, their warm-hearted affection and responsiveness, their flashing temper flaring out of a customary good humor.

"Refugio Marie"

The often cited Mexican thriftlessness has many sources. Not only has the peon been kept in a state of dependence in his own country, so that he could scarcely be expected to develop the quality of thrift, but any saving has been actually discouraged. Scarcely would the thrifty man accumulate more than the barest necessities when his possessions would be set upon by someone stronger than he. It has seemed safer to possess nothing that would arouse the cupidity of the strong.

The obverse side of the thriftlessness is the Mexican generosity. In Denver whole families are entertained weeks on end, even when the host's cupboard is bare and his purse flat. The adoption of children is very frequent. The foster children may not be very well cared for, but at least they share and share alike with the rest of the family, and are showered with tenderness and affection.

"Fiestas and Slippers"

It is interesting to notice, in many missions and churches ministering to the Mexicans, that the missionaries have subordinated their own taste in decoration to the Latin-Indian love for bright color. Several times I have seen the woodwork painted the peculiarly vivid shade of blue so common throughout New Mexico, and chairs, wall-paper, and curtains all gay of hue.

Story-telling and play are given great place in the missions. As is so often observable among underprivileged groups, the play instinct is undeveloped, but is easily roused and fostered.

"Empty Stomachs"

I am sorry to say that the description of the Lopez shack is understated rather than exaggerated. Repeatedly the condition occurs, the parents knowing too little English to become acquainted with the existence of relief agencies, or too proud to seek help, and the children being too young to under-

stand. They are aliens, set down helpless in a land they do not comprehend—in the United States, but not of it.

"The Home Road"

The project of the Friendship School Bags carried on in 1928 was heartily endorsed by Mexicans as well as Americans. The choice of a gift was symbolic, since Mexico was making such remarkable advance in the way of public schools. The bags were of sturdy and attractive fabrikoid, adorned with pictures, decorative border and lettering, finely embossed, colored, and gilded. On one side was a picture of three happy children, with the captions in Spanish, "Friendship to the Children of the World," and "Message of Goodwill." On the other side "Goodwill Greetings" was inscribed in English. Each contained a letter in Spanish and English, introducing the giver or givers of the bag. Each contained also a set of cards, showing the great liberators of the two countries, Washington and Hidalgo; the two great reformers, Lincoln and Juárez; the two Liberty Bells; Niagara Falls and Juanacatlán Falls; and Lindbergh and the Mexican good-will flier (who lost his life in our country on his return flight to Mexico), Carranza. The other gifts were optional, except that there could not be more than ten or less than five, of fairly uniform type and value and non-sectarian. Thousands of bags were distributed to children from six to twelve years of age, on Mexico's Independence Day, September 16.

General

The early history of Mexico is peculiarly picturesque and colorful. When Cortez entered the country in 1516 he found a complex system of government, an elaborate ritual of worship, and a luxurious mode of living among royalty and nobles. Long before that time the people possessed libraries of picture-writing (ruthlessly destroyed by their conquerors), a system of arithmetic, a calendar, and some knowledge of astronomy. They had schools, and hospitals with skilful physicians. They used silver, gold, lead, tin, and copper, and

made a bronze with which they could cut not only metals but, by using with it a silicious dust, jewels as well. Their goldsmiths were acknowledged by the Spanish to be superior to their own. Their weavers wove a beautiful cotton cloth, often dyed brilliant scarlet with cochineal; and they made an exquisite featherwork, a sort of mosaic in which parrot and humming-bird plumage were most used. The national religions were administered with splendid pomp and ritual, but, in common with other primitive religions, made use of human sacrifice.

A description of one of the royal palaces gives an idea of the magnificence of the times. It was built on a conical hill laid out in terraces or hanging gardens, and ascended by five hundred and twenty stately steps. The garden that crowned the summit held a reservoir filled by means of an aqueduct carried over hills and valleys for miles on masonry piers. Four other reservoirs stood at lower levels, each with a statue in its midst; and from these storage places water was conducted through the gardens in rivulets and cascades. Among the flowers and shrubbery stood marble porticos and pavilions and baths, and in the midst of all this fragrant coolness was the king's villa.

The palace of Montezuma (more correctly Moctezuma) was said to hold a throne of gold set with emeralds and turquoises. His dinner service was of gem-studded gold, and the dinner itself of many rare courses, the heated food being kept hot by chafing-dishes. Montezuma himself was attended only by nobles. He bathed four times a day, each time changing his garments, which he never wore more than once. It was a time of barbaric pomp and splendor, amazing refinements mingled with amazing crudities.

Mexico has made many contributions to the everyday comfort and pleasure of other nations. It is said that the original dahlia came from the Aztec gardens, as also the earliest known tomatoes. Chocolate seems to have been used first among this people; and cochineal, at one time so important industrially, was introduced into Europe from Mexico. It is

well also to bear in mind the present contributions to the arts and crafts—hand-wrought silver, cobweb drawnwork, finely woven basketry, well-shaped and decorated pottery, *sarapes* and blankets excellent in color and design, fine tile-work, embossed leather: these are a few of the indigenous arts and crafts. There is also a rising and creative interest in the fine arts, especially in painting.

PART II

THE COURSE

By

HARRIET LOUISE FULLEN

APPROACH

Will you join the Good-will Makers?
There's something you'd like to know
About boys and girls in the U.S.A.
Who come from Mexico.

READY-MADE activity programs are like store clothes. They seldom fit exactly as they are, but if the material is good enough and there is enough of it, a few alterations and adjustments to the individual make them satisfactory. We hope teachers will approach the plans suggested in this course with this thought in mind. In many instances you will find more material than you can use; in others you may wish to substitute material of your own. In this case you will, of course, choose material most suited to your own needs and the needs of the group you are teaching. Remembering that you will make these changes for the benefit of your own particular group, the following are a few principles that you will find have constant value.

Make the first appeal to natural child interests. What people, objects, and activities are a part of the primary child's world? In what ways can you present the Mexican boy in these same situations? We want our boys and girls to learn to know Mexican children as people like ourselves, living and facing situations similar to those we face, and reacting to them in much the same way. Naturally we shall hope thereby to draw the Mexican people into the circle of our everyday life and to win their confidence and friendship.

Make the initial approach an objective one. The primary child does not respond readily to abstract ideas; he is interested in things, things that can be seen or otherwise understood through his senses. Anything therefore which can give information in a concrete definite way, such as a model of a house, pictures of the people and life in Mexico, the work of Mexicans, etc., will help to interest children as just telling about them could not possibly do.

An interesting opportunity will present itself to teachers living near the larger centers to arrange to go with their classes to an exhibit which is to be sent by Mexico in response to the Mexican Friendship School Bag project. Handmade cabinets (one for each state), the work of Indian tribes who have been noted for centuries for this type of handcraft, will be sent as Mexico's return gift.

The cabinets will contain specimens of the crafts indigenous to the Mexican people, together with samples of the school work of elementary grade children. This exhibit will be sent to the United States some time in the winter of 1929-30. The cabinets will be assigned to the various state committees, which will have the routing of them to the centers throughout the state.

Make the aim for which you are teaching a conscious part of yourself. Keep the aim constantly in mind and make the thing you are doing a means for attaining it. In this way an entire meeting may take on a course foreign to your original plan, and still you may guide the group to a realization of your purpose. Never miss an opportunity to allow self-expression and spontaneity in the children merely because it does not fit into the program at an appointed time. Before assuming leadership in the

enterprises suggested, view the plans as a whole, not piecemeal from one meeting to the next. In this way you need have no alarm if some concepts emerge before others; you will be ready to face each situation as it develops in the group, and not necessarily as it develops in the text.

Carefully select materials to be used throughout the course. It is evident that a leader who begins with certain needed materials is at a decided advantage. The following articles will be useful: scissors, pencils, crayons, paste, erasers, cord, plasticine, pins, paper, cardboard, pasteboard boxes, old magazines, and newspapers. Metal or cardboard bottle tops may be used for paste containers. Set aside a portion of the cupboard for these special supplies. If there is no cupboard, it may be possible for a week-day group to make suitable supply chests from orange crates or packing boxes. These may be painted to harmonize with the room, and attractive cretonne curtains hung at the front.

Provide for child activity. This has already been suggested, but it is not enough to allow child activity to take place; it should be definitely planned for. Let us turn to an actual situation. Recall an ordinary child's interest as revealed in his frequent question, "Where do you live?" With this interest as a basis, the following incident was planned. One sees that the children's reactions were entirely spontaneous, but one sees also that the teacher was prepared to impart information and to develop her aim of giving the children a background of knowledge upon which to base a better understanding of the Mexican people.

Jean and Wayne were the first to arrive early one Sun-

day morning. On a table at the front of the room was a grass hut made of shredded palm leaves fastened securely with mud. Two members of one of the intermediate girls' clubs had made the hut for the occasion.

JEAN: Oh, look at the little house!

TEACHER: Many girls and boys live in houses like this in Mexico. Do you know any Mexican boys and girls?

WAYNE: Some Mexicans live up on B—— Street. But their houses aren't like this. Is this one made of mud? I should think it would crack.

TEACHER: The people who build houses like this live in a country where there is very little rain. It is very warm almost all of the time. In some of the cities the people make houses entirely out of a kind of mud called adobe. [Other children enter the room.]

A CHILD: I'd like to make a house like that.

TEACHER: Perhaps you could make one at home this week. We could keep it to show to our visitors and to any other children who have not seen one. There is a picture of a house like that in one of the books I brought today. Would you like to find it?

A CHILD (*who has been examining a doll which is sitting in front of the house*): Look at the little doll! Isn't she cute?

TEACHER: Some of the Indian girls in Mexico dress like that. They are very fond of bright colors. On our walls are some pictures of houses like this, with children sitting outside the door and mothers cooking dinner. Would you like to find them and show them to the other children who have just come in? [Groups of children scamper off in pairs, sharing the pictures with each other.]

A CHILD: I read a book about Mexico once.

A CHILD: My father took a trip to Mexico.

TEACHER: That is very interesting. Perhaps you would like to tell the other children about it some time.

A CHILD: Look at the little jars outside. There's a grass mat inside too.

TEACHER: The grass mat is called a *petate*—they use it just

as we use a bed. The Mexicans weave beautiful baskets and mats. Sometimes they make toys by weaving palm leaves into the shape of horses and soldiers. The pottery in Mexico is very colorful and lovely in form, and often is covered with beautiful designs.

Plan for an exhibit. Begin early to interest the children in an exhibit table, to which may be contributed such articles as photographs, straw sombreros, baskets, carvings, drawnwork, pottery, etc. The discovery of new materials and participation in the collecting is conducive to interest and enthusiasm. A library corner may be set up in an adjoining classroom or in a part of the church itself. This may contain a box of pictures, children's stories about Mexico, maps, picture books, or any other materials which may be obtained in the home, public library, museum, or missionary organizations of the church. The children may enjoy making an album to contain pictures selected for the purpose of showing visitors scenes of Mexico and Mexican life. This could be utilized as a permanent reference exhibit for the department even after the course is completed. The teacher will do well to let the library corner develop as a project among the children and invite contributions. It is advisable to plan for the children to discover new material each week. The following unique contribution which came to one of the groups from a child became the pride of the department.

Geraldine and Marion had mentioned having some books at home in which were stories of Mexico, and had promised to bring them to class. At the following meeting they came without the books, but bearing a large drawing of a Mexican boy fishing in a brook. He was

dressed in native costume, wearing the large sombrero and carrying a wide sarape over his shoulder.

MARION: My mother said we'd better not bring our books, because they might get lost or something. They belong to my sister. But my sister copied this picture, and said we could have it.

GERALDINE: My sister's going to be an artist. She's thirteen. She said we could keep the picture here, and maybe she'd draw us another one.

The picture was given a prominent place on the wall, and became one of the favorites. It served not only to increase our interest in Mexican people, but encouraged the children to bring other articles from home, as well as to attempt original contributions.

Make use of the children's ability to read. Children of primary age are unable to read easily, but this difficulty may be surmounted. Make picture posters containing simple rhymes. You will be surprised to find the six-year-olds quite delighted with them. After you have repeated the words, you will find the children laboriously spelling them out at odd moments and readily recognizing them at the next meeting. Do not hesitate to use a limited amount of reading material. Even the younger children are very proud of their newly found ability to read; the only mistake would be to make the material too difficult. The older primary children will be able to read simple books. Those containing pictures will appeal to them particularly.

Let the children help to plan. In the succeeding sessions are worship programs and suggestions for activity. After a few meetings, however, with your guidance and suggestions the children will be capable of arranging

programs of their own. You will need to advise them continually, but children's committees appointed to meet with you from time to time will plan services not only sincere in purpose but reflecting their own natural impressions of what constitutes children's needs and the happiness of other people. Many more projects have been listed than any one leader will be able to use, so that choice may be made to meet such situations as arise.

SESSION I

"BUENOS DÍAS, AMIGOS"

Story used. "Palm Hut and Shouting School." (Page 3.)

Aim. To give the children a friendly interest in the people of Mexico who come to the United States, by presenting real situations and introducing them, through the story, to a Mexican boy and girl.

Free-interest period. Leaders accustomed to providing activity for children who come before the regular time for the session may use the material suggested here for pre-session work, although much of it is vital for the entire group and would have to be repeated at some other time. This free-interest period will count more if it can be made a regular part of the session. If you find it necessary to make the meeting hour earlier in order to include these activities, you will find the children eager to participate in them. This interval may come best before the worship period, and may be one in which children and teacher share experiences, develop projects, discuss problems, explore new materials, play games, learn new songs, or discuss service activities. The feature of this period should be informality, and the children should have opportunities for self-expression along special lines, provided their interests can be used to develop worthy aims. This informal contact with the children gives the teacher

a basis upon which to work, an intimate knowledge of the interests already formed upon which she can build.

Suggestions for activities are given in connection with the programs for each session. In some sessions the activity plans have been listed at the end of the session program rather than in the free-interest period, as in this first session, but in any event the teacher will have to build her own program and use the activities where they seem to fit in best. Obviously some of the projects outlined throughout the text are adaptable only in a post session or extra session, and not all leaders will be able to make use of them. However, whether or not a post session is possible, it is believed that some type of activity period before the worship and lesson program will be of advantage in establishing attitudes and preparing a better foundation for the realization of the leader's aim. If the group meets on week days, games may be played out of doors. The games listed in this text, however, are suitable for indoors, and some might be used on Sunday. This period may also be employed for learning a new song or for dramatizing the story. In any case, that there is need for informality and adaptation is illustrated in the story of Harold's seaplane. Harold was restless while the others were at work, and had something he was very anxious to confide. Mexico did not seem to interest him.

HAROLD: I wish you could see the seaplane I was making last week. It sure is going to be good when I finish it. It's just an old-fashioned seaplane, but I got the idea last week at the aero exhibition. I could bring it next week.

TEACHER: I should like very much to see your seaplane. If you had a real seaplane, think of all the places you could go!

HAROLD: I could go anywhere, all right, if I had a place to land.

TEACHER: You might be able to go to Mexico and land on one of the beautiful lakes. One lake, Chapala, is about a hundred miles long, and has islands in it large enough for cities. The water is very blue; it is considered one of the most beautiful lakes in Mexico.

HAROLD: I'll try to finish the thing right away.

TEACHER: We can pretend we are taking a trip to Mexico in it. Perhaps you would like to look at the map to see if there are other lakes. Then we shall want to read something about them.

Whereupon, by way of Harold's seaplane, he and several other children were led into the study of Mexico.

Worship.

PRELUDE. In Christ There Is No East Or West (not to be sung).

CALL TO WORSHIP. This Is God's House.

HYMN. Praise Him.

OFFERING. A basket may be placed near the door, so that the offering may be taken as the children come in. During the worship period the offering in the basket may be brought forward for the blessing, or a hymn may be sung which is familiar to the children.

HYMN. How Strong and Sweet My Father's Care.

PRAYER. The children should be allowed to suggest portions of the prayer. The teacher may sum up the petitions of the children in as brief a form as possible, making the impression very clear and worshipful. The following prayer might be suitable.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank thee for our beautiful country. Help us to be kind to those who come here from other lands.

Introducing the story. The story should always be introduced in such a way as to bring it close to the children's experience. The form the introduction will take will be conditioned by the experience of both teacher and group. The following situation took place with one group.

TEACHER: On my way to work every day I pass a little house which is built very low. Its roof is in need of repairs, and I used to wonder who lived there and if anyone could keep warm inside. Yesterday I saw two children playing in the yard. Both had very black hair and dark brown eyes. They were barefooted, and were skipping about, having splendid fun in the out-of-doors. Since I pass every day, I was very anxious to make friends with them, so I said, "Good morning, how are you?"

A CHILD (*growing interested*): I bet they were Mexicans. Some Mexicans live up by our school. I passed there once.

TEACHER: When I said "Good morning," both children looked at me from head to toe, but neither of them said a word. Then they slowly crept toward the house. I wondered if they did not understand my greeting. Perhaps they had never gone to school in America and could not speak my language. Perhaps they were lonely here. I wondered if they would rather be back in Mexico, in their own country where they knew other boys and girls, where they had friends to play with, and where they had a yard with flowers and trees. How I wished I could talk to them! Before they reached the door of the house I remembered I knew how to call good morning in Spanish, "Buenos días." That is the language they speak and understand. Both children turned back with a friendly smile and shyly answered, "Buenos días." "Como está usted?" I added, which means "How are you?" One of them answered "Bien, gracias," which is the Mexican way of saying "Very well, thank you."

A CHILD: I can say "Bien, gracias." A Mexican man used to work for my father. Father can speak lots of Spanish.

TEACHER: How would you like to pretend you are a Mexican boy? We could say good morning to you, and you could answer us.

The game might be continued for a few moments, the other children exchanging Mexican greetings with the group.

Telling the story.

Activities.

Preparing for a Mexican guest. It might be possible toward the end of the course to have guests who are real Mexicans, a missionary from Mexico, or a party for Mexican children. With this in mind, the children might plan to decorate the room, using pictures of birds and flowers, and any objects which Mexicans love. A window box might be made for the room, or potted plants brought from home.

Playing a game. "Good Morning, Mexican Boy" (page 125).

Making story-books. Attractive booklets may be made by binding old but unused primary graded lesson folders and Sunday school papers. These may be prepared as supplementary reading in mission schools for Mexican children in the United States where English is taught. Denominational headquarters will furnish addresses of such schools.

Making a Mexican village. The children may fashion a village out of materials at hand, using suggestions gained from pictures and from reading. If preferred, straight-line picture cutouts of a Mexican village may be obtained from the Milton Bradley Company, Springfield, Massachusetts. The people's social life may be revealed

through the making of the plaza, situated in the center of almost every village, which serves as a marketplace, a daily rendezvous for friends, and a site for public entertainments, festivals, music and dancing.

If the leader prefers to have the children make the houses themselves, the appearance of adobe huts may be achieved through the use of boxes covered with a paper pulp mixture. For a one-story house choose a square cardboard box and paste the top side of the lid to the bottom of the box. When the box is turned upside down, the lid projects upward to form a slight parapet around the flat roof. Make a flap for the door, and cut one window opening. The adobe effect is made by attaching a thin layer of paper pulp on the entire outside surface. When dry, it may be painted, but the natural color is usually appropriate. City houses may be made of plain cardboard, with corrugated paper painted red to form tile roofing. At the windows of some of these houses strips of black paper may be pasted to represent the barred windows often found in the older Spanish houses. The early Spaniards barred their windows after the custom of the ancient Moors, who used this as a means of protecting their houses. Some of the children may wish to construct two-story houses with balconies. A recipe follows for making paper pulp:

Shred newspaper and put in a cheesecloth bag; soak in water several hours, and work with hands or on a washboard. Add to three cups of pulp one cup of flour, one-half teaspoonful of powdered alum, and one-half cup of table salt. Mix thoroughly, and use within a few hours.

SESSION II

SOUTH OF THE BORDER

Story used. "Railway Trains." (Page 11.)

Aim. To look upon the Mexicans as a people having a noble and romantic racial heritage, worthy of our honor and respect.

Free-interest period. Have in the room a globe or map showing North America and Europe. Obtain as many pictures as possible of ancient pyramids and shrines of Mexico, showing carvings and architecture of ancient Mexican civilization. Show pictures of the floating gardens of the canals and lakes in the neighborhood of Mexico City. Let the children feel free to ask questions, and urge them to discover new objects of interest in the room.

The following record of an incident taking place in a free-interest period illustrates the spontaneous manner in which the teacher adapted situations to her purpose.

HORACE: I'd like to draw a picture of the American flag to put over this Mexican house.

TEACHER: That would be lovely. It would show the people how happy we are to have them live in our country and respect our flag. [Horace is given materials to draw the American flag, which he soon brings and puts above an adobe house.] Perhaps you would like to see a Mexican flag. [Other children approach.] This flag is green, white and red. Just as here in the United States some of us like to think that each color of our flag has a meaning,

so we find that many of the Mexicans think of the colors of their flag as having special meanings too. One interpretation tells us that green stands for hope, or the desire of the people for better things—for music and art and education. Red stands for loyalty and their strong love of country. White represents purity, and stands for their desire to have a country in which the people are all good and kind.

A CHILD: Our flag is red, white and blue. Our teacher said red stood for bravery.

TEACHER: Yes, we do think of the red as representing bravery and loyalty and love of country, and of the white and blue as standing for purity and truth. You all know how our flag was made, and the meaning of the stars and stripes. There is also a story about the meaning of the Mexican flag. What do you see in the center of the flag? [The children point out the eagle, snake, and cactus.] Many, many years before anyone across the ocean knew America existed, there were people living in Mexico who were very much like the Indians that were living in the country which afterward became the United States. One time some of these Mexican people were wandering in a desert, looking for a place to build a city. The priests said that their god Mexitli had promised to give them a sign when they came to the proper place. This sign was to be an eagle standing on a cactus plant, with a snake in its beak. Suddenly they saw this very thing, and after their long wanderings the people settled themselves and founded a city, which was called Mexico after the name of the god. The name Mexico is written out in large letters on a map in this room.

MARIAN (*finding the letters on the map*): Here it is! [The group follows Marian to the map.]

TEACHER: Now the people call their entire country Mexico, and their capital city, Mexico City. After the first people settled there the city grew, and palaces were built for their kings, and shrines for their gods. Some of these they decorated with precious metals, and others they painted with bright colors. They carved statues and worked beau-

tiful designs in stone. After America was discovered, many Spanish explorers went to Mexico. As did many of the people of their time, following conquest and settlement, they introduced changes not only in the customs and the appearance of the country, but in the lives of the people. They rebuilt cities, and replaced ancient shrines with churches of their own and required the natives to attend. Because the conquerors gave allegiance to Spain, Spanish became the national language. Of course, many of the natives would not submit to the new rulers, and after a long time the Mexicans were able to free themselves from their conquerors, but many of them still go to the great cathedrals the Spaniards built, and Spanish is the language generally used.

Worship.

PRELUDE. America the Beautiful. Sing one stanza.

HYMN. Praise Him.

OFFERING.

SCRIPTURE. *Psalms* 15 : 1-3. In presenting this thought it would be well for the teacher to have a Bible at hand so that the children may understand that the message is derived from it.

In the Bible there is a Psalm that tells what kind of conduct is pleasing to God. Listen to the words of the Psalm. They tell us to do good things, and to speak the truth at all times.

HYMN. I Think When I Read.

Telling the story.

Activities.

Making pottery. The boys and girls will enjoy making bits of pottery either for display in the exhibit, or as part of the Mexican village. In the village the pottery

may be arranged on display at the plaza as a feature of market day. Modeling clay or plasticine will be useful for this purpose, although a very effective substance may be prepared from cornstarch and salt.

To one cup of salt add one-fourth cup of cornstarch and one-fourth cup of water. Mix well, and heat until the mixture stiffens into a soft paste. It is necessary to stir constantly, as the substance thickens in a few seconds. When molded, this paste becomes very hard, and can be painted in any colors.

Making yarn mats and sarapes. There is sure to be a special interest in the Indian rugs and sarapes of Mexico. If it is possible to visit either a museum or shop where Mexican rugs are on display, the children may learn much for themselves by way of appreciation of coloring and design. Various tribes of Mexican Indians have designs peculiar to their own groups which may be easily recognized from the others. The children will enjoy weaving small striped sarapes, using the frequent combinations of green, white, yellow and red. Attractive effects may also be created on paper with parquetry designs of some of the more elaborate patterns.

Making a poster. "What the Mexicans Send to the United States." One group illustrated a poster on which the following was inscribed:

Some things that they make
And some things that grow,
The Mexicans send us
From Mexico.

Pictures of numerous articles were used, such as tomatoes, beans, peas, corn, pepper, bananas, rubber, silver, pottery, glassware, ropes, blankets, embroidery, straw hats and mats, etc.

SESSION III

CHILD LABOR vs. CHILD LOVE

Story used. "The Beet Fields." (Page 25.)

Aim. To further attitudes of helpfulness and affection toward Mexican children, through appreciation of some of the reasons for their irregular attendance at school, and the injustice of the labor exacted from them.

Free-interest period. Use pictures of the leading products which are harvested by the Mexican children—sugar beets, asparagus, apricots, cherries, cotton, grapes, peaches, prunes, walnuts, beans, cantaloupes, and tomatoes.

Few studies have been made of the actual number of children employed in agricultural pursuits. The families are migratory, going from one place to the next as work calls them. Although school attendance is compulsory, the families reside such a short time in one place that attendance officers are baffled. The walnut, cotton, and asparagus crops of California require laborers during the school sessions.[1] The family goes out as a group, the children, down to the youngest, doing what they can.

The actual economic value of the Mexican child's labor is almost negligible. The problem seems to be an educational one. The children have been tremendously handi-

[1] In 1924 the Bureau of Labor Statistics of California made a study which revealed over five thousand children employed in the state, most of them Mexicans.

capped in the learning process, and the rural school has not had sufficient special room facilities to meet their needs. Among the children themselves the incentive to attend school has been low, owing to unhappy associations and retardation in school subjects. There is much that American children can do to make school more pleasant for the Mexicans, and to create surroundings which attract them.

Worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP. This Is God's House.
HYMN. Can a Little Child Like Me.
OFFERING.
SCRIPTURE. *Acts* 20:35b.
HYMN. The Children's Service.

Telling the story.

Prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, help us to find things to do for the Mexican boys and girls at school and at play. May they have a chance to go to school and learn and be happy, instead of having to do hard work in the fields. May they find opportunity and friendship here when they come to our country.

Activities. Have the children write or make a picture for some friend which will tell them how hard many Mexican boys and girls have to work, and how difficult they find it, when they can attend each school for such a short time, for them to do good work at school. If possible, show specimens of work done by Mexican children who have had opportunity to attend school regularly, either in this country or Mexico.

SESSION IV

IN THE LAND OF TODAY

Story used. "Special-Room Magic." (Page 32.)

Aim. To lead the children of our country to a desire to share with the Mexican boys and girls the privileges and opportunities which are a part of our democracy.

Free-interest period. Select pictures for the room which will show industrial, cultural and municipal advantages that can be shared with the Mexican people—pictures showing schools, churches, playgrounds, hospitals, orthopedic and dental clinics, factories, day nurseries, libraries, pure foods, warm clothing, friends, teachers, etc.

Care should be taken here to show something of the movements which are taking place in Mexico itself to educate the rural citizenry and foster industrial education. The teacher should have information concerning the rural school movement sponsored by the Mexican Department of Public Education. Data on this subject may be secured directly from the Mexican government, or may be read in *Mexican Folkways* (see bibliography), a Mexican-English magazine published in Mexico City. The eagerness of Mexicans of all classes for education, and the government provisions for it, are very significant. One needs also to be aware of the renaissance in literature and art which is going on in Mexico at the present time.

As teachers we must appreciate the lofty idealism of a Mexican leadership which is endeavoring to give the country stability and national consciousness. We are not comparing America and Mexico to effect a contrast in advantages. Our purpose is to develop a wholesome attitude and intelligent outlook on the part of our children, so that they may love their own country more by enjoying it with others, and love and admire other countries as well.

Worship.

PRELUDE. America the Beautiful.
HYMN. The Father's Care.
OFFERING.

Telling the story. A discussion leading to a realization of Consuelo's homesickness may be a suitable introduction to the story.

How did you feel when you were away from your mother and father, brothers, sisters, playmates? How do you suppose Consuelo feels miles away from her own country? Can we not help all of the little Consuelos and Rafaels by being more anxious to share with them what we ourselves enjoy in our home land?

Prayer. Heavenly Father, we thank thee for the schools in our United States, for our teachers, our hospitals, and the churches. Help us to be kind and thoughtful toward others, and to share our blessings with them. Amen.

Activities. Although any of the activities suggested below would be suitable in this session, no one group will be able to participate in all of them.

Playing riddles.

How many children have ever played riddles? Mexican children are very fond of them. There are riddles in their

books at school and in the magazines they read, and they are very clever at making riddles themselves. Some riddles are in verse. You know that a riddle describes something without telling what it is. Someone has to guess. Would you like to guess some riddles today? We have some pictures on the wall which show some of the things American children have which may be shared with the Mexican people. I shall make a riddle about one of them and you may guess what it is. Then the one who guesses may make a riddle of his own. Perhaps you would like to look more closely at the pictures before you begin.

When the children are ready, the teacher may begin with a few verses such as these:

Its house is of glass
About so [gesture] high.
It appears on the doorstep
When dawn is nigh.
(—Milk)

Two things to wear
On the front of one's head
Used just in daytime,
Not taken to bed.
(—Glasses)

Tall as a house,
It has windows and doors.
Ceilings are high,
It has hardwood for floors.
Our children go daily,
Mexicans too,
There are hosts of things
For all to do.
(—A School)

Something flat,
Something square,
In your school
They're everywhere.
They're read inside,

The leaves are white.
It's best to use them
When it's light.
(—Books)

Playing a game. "The Mexicans at Work" (page 127).

Making cards for English classes. The children could mount pictures of objects such as common foods, articles of clothing, furniture, etc., which might be used as illustrations in English classes for foreigners. The words may be formed below the pictures with black gummed letters which come ready-made.

Planning a trip to a home, nursery, or mission school where there are Mexican children. If it is not possible for all of the children to go, a committee might be appointed to accompany the teacher. The group may discuss the duties of this committee, and charge them with discovering any information of general interest. They may be sent for the purpose of inquiring about some need to which the entire group might minister.

SESSION V

IN THE SPIRIT OF JESUS

Story used. "Refugio Marie." (Page 38.)

Aim. To give our boys and girls an opportunity to share and appreciate some of the finer attitudes of the Mexican people, such as kindness, courtesy, unselfishness, gentleness, hospitality, and love of children.

Free-interest period. Show such pictures as "Christ Blessing Little Children," "Christ Among the Children of the Nations," and pictures of Mexican boys and girls with pets, children playing or in school, helping mother or running errands.

The children may enjoy modeling little reproductions of their pets from clay or plasticine. Perhaps they would like to make a model from a picture of some Mexican boy's pet. The children in Mexico are very fond of small clay figures of domestic animals. They comprise a large class of favorite toys.

Worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP. This Is God's House.

HYMN. I Think When I Read.

OFFERING.

SCRIPTURE. Long ago Jesus was talking to some people who wanted to know what they might do to please God. Of course none of us can see God but we can all love him, because of the love and the care he gives us, and for the many

beautiful things which are ours to enjoy. People have known for a long time that God wanted them to love him, and early they began to want to do things to please him. Some thought it would please him if they set aside food and money and precious jewels as gifts for him, but others realized that they couldn't really give *things* to God. When the people asked Jesus what they might do, he said the Heavenly Father was most pleased when we did things for other people, and that this was exactly as though we had done things directly for him. You see, God loves people so much that his happiness comes when they are happy too. Would you like to know the words Jesus said as they are written in this book? [Read *Matthew* 25 : 40.]

Lead the children to discuss things they may do which are helpful to others. Let them discuss acts of kindness in the home or in the school, also thoughts and acts toward the Mexican people which would be pleasing to the Heavenly Father.

HYMN. The Children's Service.

PRAYER.

Telling the story. As an approach to the story you may introduce a discussion on the care of babies, either through the use of pictures or through a discussion on the part of small brothers and sisters.

How may we help mother in caring for the younger children? How may we share our toys and belongings with them? How may we be friends with our neighbor's children? What can we do for the Mexican babies?

Activities.

Playing a game. The Mexican thank-you game (page 126).

Making a poster. "Helping Mother."

Making animal scrapbooks. Let the children discuss their pets. Develop from this an appreciation for the Mexican child's love of birds and animals. Perhaps they may wish to draw pictures of their own pets, or find pictures of animals which will show Mexican boys and girls what kind of pets the children of the United States usually love.

SESSION VI

CLEAN HANDS AND HEARTS

Story used. "Fiestas and Slippers." (Page 45.)

Aim. To increase understanding and appreciation of the difficulties of the Mexican people in adjusting themselves to life in a new country.

Free-interest period. Have on display pictures and articles which show the modes of living of the Mexican people, both in Mexico and the United States. Health posters expressing habits of hygiene or suggesting proper foods may also be used. The children will be interested in hearing about a poster which was drawn by a Mexican boy in one of the rural schools of Mexico, in which he illustrated six rules of hygiene. Perhaps some of them will wish to make similar drawings. Here are the rules: Bathe every day; wash your hands before meals; eat vegetables and fruits; brush your teeth; play in the open air; sleep with the window open.

Listed in the Activities at the close of this session are additional projects optional to this period.

Worship.

PRELUDE AND OPENING SONG. Morning Hymn.
HYMN. Praise Him.
OFFERING.
HYMN. He Cares For Me.
PRAYER. The Lord's Prayer.

Introducing the story.

TEACHER: How many of you have ever moved into a new house?

A CHILD: We're going to move next week.

A CHILD: We moved once. We used to have a house, but it was too little, and now we've got another room just for the baby.

A CHILD: We've got a new furnace down in the basement where we live now; we don't need to have a stove.

TEACHER: Did you ever stop to think how it might seem to move into a country where you had never been before, and where the language was one you couldn't speak and couldn't understand?

Telling the story. At this time the leader may wish to tell only those parts of the story that deal with the schoolroom fiestas and the incident with the health inspector. The material leading up to Rafael's announcement of the Mexican fiesta may be used at some other time.

Activities.

Making health posters.

One day when I visited a day nursery where there were Mexican children, the lady in charge showed me a cupboard with long shelves in it. "And what do you keep here?" I asked. "We keep clean clothes, wash cloths, towels, toothbrushes, and soap. Every morning we show the boys and girls how to do at home the things that will help them keep well after they stop coming to the nursery."

I wonder if any of you would like to make some posters which would help these children want to do as the nurse tells them? Here is a picture of a boy washing his teeth. Here is a little girl eating a bowl of healthful food and drinking a glass of milk. Here is another eating fruit. Would you like to make some verses about them?

If the children have had the opportunity of visiting such a place as the one described, this project will carry even more meaning. The leader will find aid in *Health Training in the Schools* by Theresa Dannsdill, published by the National Tuberculosis Association, New York, 1925.

An outdoor fiesta. If conditions are favorable, the children may enjoy a fiesta out of doors like the one described in the story. An open-air stove may be constructed of bricks, with an iron or tin plate for the top. If it is not possible to make tortillas, ordinary griddle cakes may be used as forks for eating the frijoles. Very tasty frijoles and chili may be obtained now in cans, but the more ambitious may wish to try a recipe such as that included here. In any event, most of the food should be prepared at home, and the stove used merely for warming. One might be fortunate enough to be able to arrange for a Mexican woman to make tortillas.

Cornmeal

Add one pound of unslaked lime to a gallon of water; stir until it stops bubbling, and allow it to settle. When clear, strain the water into a kettle and add a quart of corn. White or blue corn is preferred. Boil slowly until the hulls peel off readily when the kernel is rubbed between the fingers. Let the corn drain in a colander, and wash through several waters until the taste of lye disappears. Now hull the corn and dry in a shady place. An ordinary meat grinder may be used for grinding, as the grain need not be as fine as regular cornmeal. The cornmeal should be used as soon after grinding as possible, as it is apt to ferment if kept more than a few days.

Tortillas (one dozen)

To one pint of cornmeal add a teaspoonful of salt; mix well, and add warm water until a stiff dough is formed. Set aside for about twenty minutes to let the meal absorb all of the moisture, then take a piece of dough the size of an egg, and pat between the hands to a thin cake, the thinner the better. Bake in a skillet or on a griddle or soapstone with about as much heat as is required for pancakes. Turn from one side to the other until brown.

Frijoles

An ordinary meal may be served from a quart of New Mexico dry beans. They are usually a dark reddish color, and somewhat larger than navy beans. Soak in cold water over night, and in the morning put on the stove in a large kettle of cold water and bring to a boil. Cook slowly all day if possible, but not less than six hours. Salt to taste as the beans begin to get tender. Serve in a little of the water they have been cooked in.

Dulce de Calabaza (a dessert)

Select a ripe pumpkin or squash of the light-colored variety, not the yellow-skinned kind. Cut into pieces about four inches long by two inches thick, peel and remove seeds or fiber. Place in a kettle and cover each piece well with mild lye water made from unslaked lime, and allow to stand over night. In the morning rinse the squash until all taste of the lye water is eliminated, and boil in hot water until it becomes tender, though not soft. Then plunge the pieces immediately into ice-cold water. This should make them crisp and hard. Boil five hours in a syrup made of one pound of sugar to each pound of squash, with enough water to dissolve the sugar. When done, the syrup will be clear and the squash brittle. This sweet will keep several weeks if stored in a cool place.

Other recipes for Mexican foods may be obtained by writing the State Land Office, Santa Fé, New Mexico, for their pamphlet entitled "New Mexico Cookery." The foregoing recipes were chosen because they are both nutritious and palatable if properly prepared. Some of the more highly seasoned foods would not prove suitable for children or for those unaccustomed to Mexican dishes.

SESSION VII

FRIENDS IN NEED

Story used. "Empty Stomachs." (Page 51.)

Aim. To lead our boys and girls to be conscious of the needs of the Mexican people, and to provide opportunities for definite service.

Free-interest period. Use pictures of the Good Samaritan, and of Jesus healing the sick, feeding the five thousand, or preaching to the multitudes. Some of the activities listed at the close of the session may be introduced during this period. The children may wish, however, to play games learned in previous sessions, or to complete unfinished projects.

Worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP. Morning Song.

HYMN. The Children's Service.

OFFERING.

SCRIPTURE. *Matthew* 22: 39. Talk about the meaning of the word neighbor, showing that our neighbor is not just the one who lives next door, but every person everywhere. If desirable, the story of the Good Samaritan may be reviewed. The children should be led to see that the Mexican people are our neighbors.

Telling the story.

After the story.

TEACHER: And just as Consuelo was about to take a bite of cake, whom do you suppose she thought of?

A CHILD: She probably thought of Refugio Marie and her mother. Then she saved it to take home.

TEACHER: I am quite sure she wrapped it up in her clean white handkerchief. Do you suppose she saved anything else?

A CHILD: Perhaps she took some of the ice cream.

TEACHER: She didn't try to keep the ice cream, for it would melt. Anyway, just as she was ready to leave the table the Missionary Señorita saw her. How do you suppose the Missionary Señorita felt?

A CHILD: She felt sorry.

TEACHER: Yes, for that was the first time she had known that Consuelo and Rafael and mother and the baby were hungry.

Activities.

Making paper flowers. Because of their love of flowers the Mexicans will have artificial flowers if real ones are not available. Some of the government schools for girls now have courses in *floristas* or *flores,* or the art of making flowers. Some of the children will enjoy making simple paper flowers, to be used as decorations for the assembly room or to be taken to Mexican families. It goes without saying that for May day nothing will surpass real flowers and May baskets, but artificial flowers may be convenient at other times of the year.

Dressing dolls. After visiting a nursery school for Mexican children, one class of girls dressed small dolls to be presented later as gifts. Mindful of the Mexican's love of gay and colorful combinations, they made every effort to make the dolls attractive and pleasing.

Making doll furniture and toys. As their share in such a project, the boys may make doll furniture as well as various other toys and scrapbooks. Wagons and trains

may be made from butter cartons (folded inside out), with milk bottle tops for wheels. Round oatmeal boxes are suitable for oil trucks and sprinkling wagons. Use wooden spools for dials in a toy box radio set. When finished, these may be colored with crayons or painted and varnished. One class used these verses on a poster to build up enthusiasm for the project:

Come, let's make a scrapbook, boys,
For a *muchacho* who has no toys.
Girls, would you like a doll to dress,
To bring some *niña* happiness?

SESSION VIII

CHRISTMAS

Note.—The projects in other sections of this text may be taken up at a time of the year when it might not seem appropriate to include a Christmas service. In such event this section may be deferred and used at the close of the year, if the leader desires. Later, during the Christmas season, as an outgrowth of the study of the projects in this book the children may be interested in carrying on an activity which will involve some definite service to the Mexican people. In this case a Christmas program which is Mexican in character, such as the one suggested here, may serve to deepen the spiritual impression and foster a knowledge and respect for those being served.

Story used. "The Box-Car Christmas." (Page 18.)

Aim. To deepen love and respect for Mexican people through participating in Christmas activities in the Mexican fashion.

Free-interest period. The success of this period will depend upon the teacher's ability to use her information to stimulate in the children the desire not only for activity, but for more knowledge and understanding. The story of "The Box-Car Christmas" and its background notes will supply the essential facts, and references in the bibliography will furnish additional materials.

A pleasing activity for this period may be the learning

of "El Rorro," the Christmas song printed on the next page. It is a folksong sung during the season of the *posadas* on the night commemorating the birth of the Christchild. The *posadas,* literally meaning lodging, is the name given the Christmas season, which covers nine days of celebration. For eight nights families and friends form a procession and seek lodging at some *casa* in the neighborhood. This is essentially a dramatization of the Christmas Eve story of Mary and Joseph seeking lodging at the inn. The little procession starts out with the one in the lead carrying the clay figures of the Madonna and Joseph. When they arrive at an appointed house, they begin to knock loudly on the door while protests come from within to the effect that they may not enter. Finally reconciliation is made, and they go inside for the night. This is repeated at various homes each evening throughout the period, accompanied by religious rites and social festivities. On the ninth evening a Christchild is placed in a manger at the family altar, and he is finally sung to sleep with the lullaby already mentioned.

Gift-giving, which comprises one of the major aspects of our Christmas, does not occur in Mexico until January 7th, which is called the day of Los Reyes Magos, or the day of the Wise Men.[1] On this day the children put their shoes out on the balconies and the Wise Men fill them with toys.

Worship.

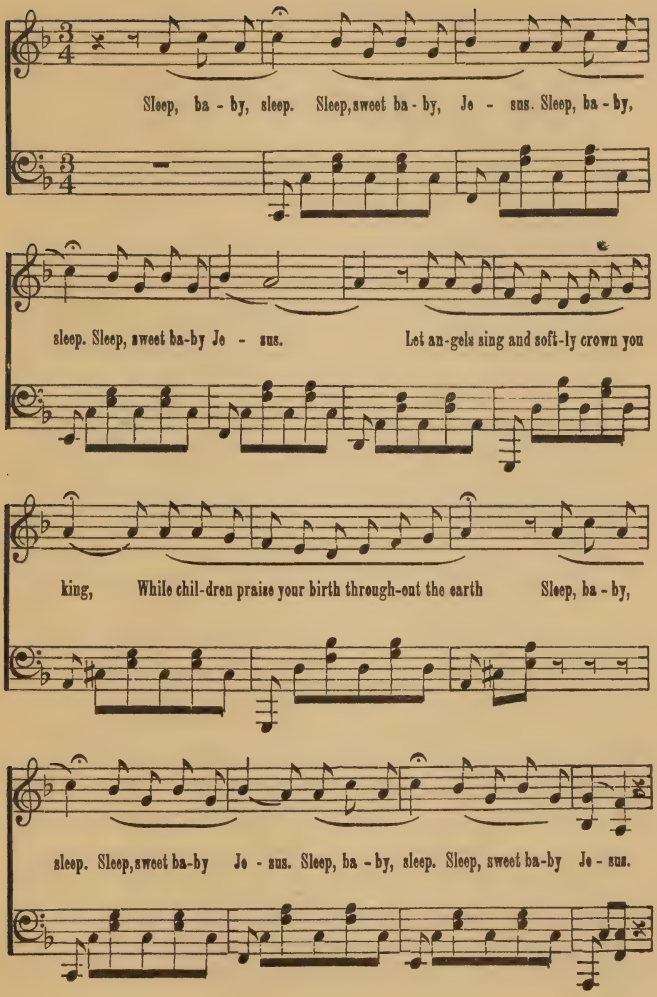
OPENING HYMN. Away in a Manger.

OFFERING.

HYMN. Silent Night.

[1] For articles on Christmas in Mexico, write to *Mexican Folkways.* (See Bibliography.)

EL RORRO


Sleep, ba - by, sleep. Sleep, sweet ba - by, Je - sus. Sleep, ba - by,
sleep. Sleep, sweet ba-by Je - sus. Let an-gels sing and soft-ly crown you
king, While chil-dren praise your birth through-out the earth Sleep, ba - by,
sleep. Sleep, sweet ba-by Je - sus. Sleep, ba - by, sleep. Sleep, sweet ba-by Je - sus.

SCRIPTURE. The Christmas story. This should be given as it is presented in *Matthew* or *Luke*.

PRAYER. Our Father, we thank thee for Jesus, who came to the world as a little baby. We know that he loves all children in every part of the world. Help up also to love others, and on his birthday to be filled with a spirit of kindness and understanding.

Telling the story.

Activities.

Dramatization. A unique emphasis on the Christmas story may be achieved in a representation of the Nativity according to Mexican custom, consisting of a dramatization of the quest for shelter by the Holy Family, through the use of figures representing the characters of Mary and Joseph, the Wise Men, the shepherds, and the Child in the manger. Small dolls may be dressed in Biblical costumes, and animals fashioned from wood or clay. If it is not possible to effect this scene with the figures themselves, it may be desirable to set it forth in poster form, using cutouts either in colors or black silhouette.

Making Christmas toys. Jack-pits might be the name given a game played by Mexican children, similar to jacks but played with fruit stones. Dried pits of plums, apricots, prunes, cherries, or any other smooth-stoned fruit may be used. These may be painted in bright colors and packed in dozens in attractive boxes, each set accompanied by a rubber ball. Ornaments for the Christmas tree may be made by covering nuts with tinsel or bright paper. An attainment quite within the children's reach will be the making of toy animals from peanuts and toothpicks. Bits of wax or paraffin may aid in attaching them

to cardboard or blocks of wood, and may be used also to make ears and noses. The more grotesque these animals are, the better; they are more striking with the addition of wire or feather tails. Colored paper may be pasted on for wings.

Flower gifts. For primary departments situated in the West, it may be possible to make gifts of potted plants to some institution where they can be enjoyed by Mexican people. Jars or cans may be painted or decorated in bright paper as containers. A bright mosaic effect may be imparted by first painting the container and then pasting bits of colored paper on the surface before giving a final coat of shellac.

A piñata party. This may add a social value to the Christmas season, and may be shared either with a Mexican group or with the children's parents. Details for a project of this nature are found in "A Mother's Party," page 117.

SESSION IX

MEXICAN-AMERICANS

Story used. "The Home Road." (Page 58.)

Aim. To let the children enjoy the happiness of the Lopez family, and to help them to look upon them as people who deserve a happy home in the United States.

Free-interest period. For this session a service will be appropriate which can give our boys and girls a consciousness of the feeling of brotherhood among nations which should exist in this country. We expect the Mexicans who come to the United States to honor our country and respect our flag, but we must also remember that they are Mexicans as well as Americans, and if we expect them to honor us we must also honor them and their mother country as well.

The following account of a group activity may suggest a procedure desirable in this lesson. Several boys and girls discussed informally with their leader the meaning of the pledge of allegiance to our flag. Shortly the question arose as to the extent to which we might share with others our love for our own country, and how much we should expect those who come from other countries to love our native land. The children were finally led to the conclusion that we can love and respect and honor and trust and give service to other countries besides our own. For example, we can love and honor and serve Mexico as well as our own country, though we may not give

allegiance to Mexico, as that would mean we might no longer remain Americans. We can pledge allegiance to only one country, the country which governs us—either the one where we are born or the one we adopt. Therefore if the Mexicans come to our country to stay, we invite them to pledge allegiance with us to the flag of the United States.

The children thereupon planned a service in which they used both the flag of the United States and the flag of Mexico. Then they discovered another allegiance which both groups could share, that to the Kingdom of Jesus represented by the Christian flag. The flag salutes used are given as follows:

I promise to honor and respect the flag of Mexico and the people for whom it stands, and offer friendship and service whenever they have need of me.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands; one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag and to my Savior for whose kingdom it stands; one brotherhood uniting all mankind in service and in love.

Worship.

OPENING HYMN. Praise Him.

How would you like to share this praise song with the Mexican children, just as though they were here this morning? I know some words we could add to it:

Welcome, welcome, all ye little children
Who come from Mexico.
We will praise Him, everyone together,
Wherever we may go.

OFFERING.

PRAYER. Dear Heavenly Father, we are thankful for the helpful work the Mexican people do in our country. We want to be thoughtful of them and to treat them as we should like them to treat us if we were in their country. Help us to remember that all of the beautiful things in our country are meant to be shared with others.

HYMN. Selected by the group. A patriotic song may prove suitable.

Telling the story.

SUPPLEMENTARY

A MOTHERS' PARTY

At one of our sessions, after we had been playing Mexican games, a conversation like this took place:

A CHILD: I wish we could have a party. We could play some of these games.

TEACHER: It would be fun, wouldn't it? We could have a real Mexican party. We have had a story about a Christmas party that Consuelo and Rafael attended. Do you remember the *piñata?* I think we have a book that shows a picture of one. The Mexican people are very fond of having *piñatas* at Christmas parties as well as on birthdays. Inside them the people put *dulces* and toys and nuts. When the clay pot is broken, these scatter to the floor. *Piñatas* are used instead of Christmas trees in Mexico. They are sold at shops during the holiday season, and at the market places. The people decorate them with gay tinsel and bright colors, so that they look very gay. You will find them taking the forms of any number of different objects—birds, animals, boats, and even human beings.

A CHILD: When I grow up I'm going to sail in a boat all over and visit lots of countries. Then I'll go to Mexico.

A CHILD: You will if they don't have any wars. I *hope* they don't have any more wars.

A CHILD: So do I, 'cause then you'd have to kill people and couldn't have any fun.

TEACHER: I'm sure the Mexican people would not like to have to do that either. They are so fond of being happy and sharing good times. They have parties for a whole week at Christmas time. The grown-ups go right along with the children, and everyone plays together.

A CHILD: Could we have a party and ask our mothers?

TEACHER: I think that would be splendid. We could make a real *piñata*. When do you think we should have the party? We want to be sure to have it when our mothers can come.

The children talked about the party. It was agreed that it should be in the near future, and that they would make the *piñata* the following week. In the meantime there was much to do on the part of the teacher. Two missionary organizations in the church were interviewed and were happy to cooperate. One agreed to serve light refreshments to the mothers, since the *piñata* would contain *dulces* and toys mainly for the children. The other offered to arrange for a missionary working among Mexicans to take part in the program. Members of the church were invited to make contributions to the exhibit table, which was already growing, largely owing to the efforts of the children themselves.

At the next meeting of the children it was still necessary to plan items on the program and to arrange for each one's share in the activities.

TEACHER: Now that we are to have our mothers with us next week, how could we show them what we have been doing in our meetings and how much we have enjoyed them?

A CHILD: Let's play a game!

TEACHER: What game would you like to play? We shall probably have time for only one, so we must choose it carefully. [The games were named over in preparation for voting.]

A CHILD: Let's play the one where we jump.

A CHILD: I guess we'd better not play that one. Our mothers wouldn't want to jump. [Finally they voted to play the thank-you game in which the sombrero is used.]

TEACHER: What else shall we do for our mothers, to let them know about the Mexican children?

A CHILD: Let's give a play and dress up the way we did before.

A CHILD: We could have it about some Mexicans coming to the United States.

TEACHER: Can you think of some reasons why Mexicans might want to come to the United States?

A CHILD: If they were poor, they could get jobs.

A CHILD: There'd be schools.

A CHILD: And churches.

A CHILD: And flowers.

TEACHER: There are so many beautiful flowers in Mexico that I'm sure the children would not want to come unless there might be some here. Whom would you like to have come to the United States?

A CHILD: Consuelo and Rafael.

A CHILD: Mama Lopez [this came from a child who had played Mama Lopez in a previous dramatization].

BOY: And Papa Lopez.

TEACHER: That would make a splendid scene. I can just hear Papa Lopez telling the children they are going to the United States. Papa Lopez would probably say, "I think we shall go to the United States," and Mama Lopez would say, "But will you have work?" And Consuelo would ask, "Will there be schools for girls?" For our second scene shall we have them all in the United States? Do you suppose they are very happy at first? Why not?

A CHILD: Because Papa Lopez is sick and hasn't any work.

TEACHER: And Consuelo?

A CHILD: Maybe she'd be lonesome because she didn't have anyone to play with.

TEACHER: How about Rafael? Do you think he is happy?

A CHILD: Oh, no. He doesn't like school because he can't see the words and he needs glasses.

TEACHER: And Mama Lopez?

A CHILD: She wouldn't be happy, because she didn't have food for the baby.

TEACHER: Do you suppose they were very glad they came to our country?

A CHILD: I'll bet they'd all talk about going back to Mexico.

The children and teacher continued to discuss the play, suggesting bits of dialogue that might be appropriate. Note how the responses of the children are conditioned by the stories, and how attitudes formed in previous meetings are reflected.

There follows here the spontaneous dialogue which took place during the first actual play. The children cleared a space for the stage. Mama Lopez chose a book and an eraser for her *metate,* and crouched on the floor to crush the corn into meal. She suggested that for the final production she might cover a book and eraser with paper, so that it would more nearly resemble stone. Papa Lopez sat near by on a low chair, and Rafael and Consuelo sat on the floor at his feet.

SCENE I. IN MEXICO

PAPA LOPEZ: I think we'll be going to the United States.
MAMA LOPEZ: Will you have some work to do there?
PAPA L.: Yes, ma'am. That's what I'm going for.
CONSUELO: Will there be some flowers? I wouldn't like to go unless there would.
PAPA L.: Yes.
RAFAEL: Will there be a school?
PAPA L.: Oh, yes. There are lots of schools in the United States.
CONSUELO: Will there be a school for girls?
MAMA L.: Will there be churches to go to?
PAPA L.: Oh, yes.
MAMA L.: Then let's get ready and go.

SCENE II. IN THE UNITED STATES

Mama Lopez is seated on a chair and looks very sad. Enter Papa Lopez.

MAMA L.: What's the matter, Papa?

PAPA L.: I don't like the United States. I've been sick a long time, and I can't find any work.

Enter Consuelo, crying.

MAMA L.: What's the matter, Consuelo?

CONSUELO: I haven't got any little girls at school to play with.

Enter Rafael, rubbing eyes. He is carrying a book and throws it on the floor.

MOTHER L.: What's the matter, Rafael? Don't you like school?

RAFAEL: No, I don't. My eyes hurt. I can't see to read.

PAPA L.: I almost wish we could go back to Mexico, but we haven't any way to go.

A knock is heard at the door.

MAMA L.: There's someone at the door, and we haven't anything for supper. [At this point the child taking the part had an afterthought and added, "I think it would be better if I said 'haven't anything but beans,' don't you?"]

PAPA L.: Well, you'd better go to the door, anyway. Mexicans never turn anyone away.

MAMA L.: (*going to door*): *Buenos días.*

Missionary Lady enters.

MISSIONARY LADY: *Buenos días.* I'm the missionary lady. How are you, Mr. Lopez?

PAPA L.: I'm not very well. I've been sick and I can't get any work.

MISSIONARY LADY: I think I can get a job for you where you can take care of flowers.

PAPA L.: *Mil gracias, señora.*

MISSIONARY LADY: How are you, Consuelo?

CONSUELO: I haven't any little girls to play with.

MISSIONARY LADY: I'll take you to a party tomorrow.

CONSUELO (*clapping hands*): *Gracias! Gracias!*

MISSIONARY LADY: How are you, Rafael?

RAFAEL: My eyes hurt. I can't see to read, and everybody laughs.

MISSIONARY LADY: You come with me tomorrow and I'll see that you get some glasses.

RAFAEL: *Gracias! Gracias!*

MISSIONARY LADY: And Mama Lopez, I'll bring some warm clothes for the baby. I invite all of you to come to church next Sunday too. Good-by.

Exit Missionary Lady.

PAPA L.: I think it's all right to stay in the United States, especially when you have some friends.

There was discussion about the mothers being unable to see the dolls which the children had dressed.

Our mothers will not be able to see these beautiful dolls we have dressed, for we shall have to take them to the Mexican children before our exhibit. Would you like to draw some pictures of the dolls, and write mother a little letter about them?

The girls were very happy to do this, and were soon busy drawing pictures. Delightful letters such as these were written by the children without any suggestions from the teacher:

Mother—We are making little dollies for the Mexican babies.

. .

Dear mother this is my doll. I could not do verry good but I tried my best we are going to Mexico Marian to mother

. .

We are making dollies today
And they are so gay.

. .

I wish I were in Mexico to learn to make things and weave baskets.

. .

Mother We are making dolls for the Mexicans. We are going there Friday at three o'clock.

. .

During the following week the leader sent a letter to the mothers of the children in the primary department, telling a little about the work and inviting them and their children to the party.

On the day of the mothers' party the primary room fairly shone with decorations. From corner to corner and dangling from the chandeliers were strips of white and red crêpe paper. The *piñata* swung from a cord attached to the ceiling. True, it was not a genuine *piñata*—the *dulces* and toys were tied in a stout grocery sack instead of the customary clay jar—but it was a real *piñata* to the children. A colorful *sarape,* loaned by a mother who had lived in Mexico City, adorned the piano. Lacy bits of drawnwork were displayed against black screens. Basketry, pottery, textiles, toys, books and pictures, posters and handwork, were much in evidence. The Mexican village had had a thorough renovation. Fresh shrubs and trees replaced those which had dried out, villages had been rearranged, and houses set more squarely on their foundations.

Almost every boy and girl had an opportunity to "whack the *piñata.*" "There is something inside for everyone," said the leader. "There are two kinds of packages. When the *piñata* breaks, there will be just enough to go around if each one is very careful to pick up only his or her share. Half of the packages are thick and square. Inside each one you will find a Mexican *dulce.* Be very sure you pick up only one, since you would not wish someone else to do without. Inside the other packages you will find toys. [Exclamations of delight. The toys were marbles, bracelets, small whistles,

balloons, tiny cars, etc.] Remember, one of each kind." Shrieks and laughter accompanied many unsuccessful attempts to bring the contents to the floor, until finally there was a joyous scramble.

It was anticipated that some of the boys might not be pleased if the packages they picked up contained bracelets or other gifts intended for girls. When an attempt was made to induce some of the boys to trade with girls for more suitable gifts, they were not to be persuaded, for they insisted on "taking it home." One boy whose mother could not be present said, "Is it all right to take this home to my mother?"

The mothers' party was a real success, not just because everything went smoothly or because a large number of mothers came. It was a success for several reasons: because the mothers and children enjoyed together in a holiday spirit just such games as Mexican boys and girls enjoy; because a missionary was present who knew many things of interest to do and say; because the children took an interest in the exhibit and were highly appreciative of the skill represented in the Mexican objects; and because on the way home several boys and girls were heard to say, "That was a keen party, all right."

MEXICAN GAMES

Only recently have we begun to develop play as a method of religious education; at present we are very far from exhausting the possibilities. The record of a few games played in connection with this course is given here, not that other groups may play these particular games, but that they may see the principles involved in creating them, and may also have the delightful experience of making similar ones of their own. A few games are included which were adapted from those played by Mexican children. In the best-liked games you will find elements such as guessing (Button-button), blindfolding (Blind-man's-buff), drill (Follow-the-leader), imitation (Simon-says), rhythm (Go-in-and-out-the-windows), and such others as are present in tag, relay, hide-and-seek, etc.

GOOD MORNING, MEXICAN BOY (OR GIRL)

TEACHER: Many of our boys and girls were here very early this morning. What did your superintendent say to you when you entered the room?

BOBBIE: "Good morning."

TEACHER: If a little Mexican boy or girl came to our Sunday school this morning while you were waiting for your class, what could you do?

GERALDINE: I'd say "Hello!"

TEACHER: It might be very lonesome unless someone was kind to you. Would you like to play that a Mexican boy did come? I think it might be very nice to learn to say

good morning so that the Mexican boy could understand. Whom would you like to have be the Mexican boy?

Bradley was chosen, and the children joined hands in a circle surrounding him. Since Farmer-in-the-dell is very popular with the children, they sang the following stanza to that tune as they marched:

Good morning, Mexican boy,
Good morning, Mexican boy,
Buenos días, muchacho,
Good morning, Mexican boy.

TEACHER: Now would you like the boy to choose someone to help him?

MARIAN: He could choose a teacher. [Continuing, the children sang: "The boy chooses a teacher," etc.]

The play was continued until the boy had chosen friend, mother, father, sister, brother, and finally books to read. This time they began all over again with a girl, changing *muchacho* to *muchacha,* to be correct.

THE THANK-YOU GAME

This game is intended to teach the children to appreciate the politeness of the Mexican boys and girls by learning themselves to say thank you.

The person who is It must ask the question of the others, "Will you wear my sombrero?" There must be one child chosen by the class to answer, "Yes, thank you." The others will politely answer, "No, thank you, señor," or señorita or señora. It must continue to ask each child until he finds the right one to answer yes. This one then becomes It.

Before the game begins, It must go to another room while the class chooses the person to answer yes.

ESCONDA LA CUARTA (HIDE THE STRAP)

A game the children will enjoy, and one with which they are all familiar, is this Mexican version of Drop-the-handkerchief. The chief difference in the manner of playing is that the children are all seated on the floor. The game may be played with any object.

GAME OF THE MEXICANS AT WORK

One day our discussion developed into a conversation about where the Mexican men work when they come to the United States, and the kind of work they do in order to earn money to buy food and clothing for their children.

TEACHER: Have you seen any Mexican men at work?
HAROLD: I saw one. He was helping to fix the street.
TEACHER: Can you show us how?

Shortly all of the children were playing they were working on the streets. They swung the heavy pick into the thick pavement, first from one shoulder and then the other. "This is hard work," muttered Bradley, and the others nodded appreciation.

Some of the children had seen the orange pickers, and so they dramatized this by climbing ladders, reaching for the fruit, and carefully placing it in the boxes.

"Consuelo and Rafael and their mother and father picked beets," said Jean, whereupon imaginary beets were pulled from the ground and a discussion followed about types of work that Mexicans do in the United States.

There are many splendid things the Mexicans do in their own country which they do not always have an opportunity to do here. There are some pictures in this room of some of the things they have learned to do at home in Mexico.

Some have learned at school to do these things and others have learned at home. You may have three minutes to look at the pictures; then you may come to the circle again and each of you may act out one of the pictures, and the rest of us will guess which picture you are doing. Two of you may act together if you wish. If you cannot find a picture you would like to act, perhaps I can whisper something to you instead.

There is an opportunity here to impress upon the children some of the arts and crafts of the Mexican people. Pictures may be obtained from the *National Geographic Magazine,* or bulletins published by the Secretary of Education may be secured from the Mexican government, although they are not so practical for most teachers, being printed in Spanish. *Mexican Folkways,* listed in the bibliography, will give similar information in English. The rural school bulletins show that Mexicans are being taught many home crafts such as preparation of foods, domestic hygiene, care of the sick, sewing, home decorating, and industrial occupations such as agriculture, poultry raising, cabinet making, and so on. A recent bulletin of the government lists 592 new rural schools which were established in twenty-eight states during the year 1927. Many of these schools have absorbed the entire life of the community, and are bringing untold opportunities and advantages to the native Indian stock. Those skilful in carpentry have had the experience of building their own schoolhouses. Classes in literature encourage an innate love of poetry and rhythm, and stimulate creative imagination. Classes in drawing are developing child talent for art. Music also is given a place in the program. The cover of one government bulletin shows father and son

entering school together, musical instruments in their arms.

Show through pictures and stories the Mexican aptitude for drawing, design, painting and sculpture. Let the children see samples of the beautifully carved and embossed leather work, the bead designs, weaving and basketry.

EL CORREO (THE MAIL)

In one instance a group had the privilege of playing this game with a missionary from Mexico who was able to give a number of items of interest. *Correo* comes from the word *correr,* which means to run. Mail was carried in the early days by carriers who ran from one village to another.

Each child is given the name of a town or city either in the United States or Mexico. If the city chosen is in the United States, it should be selected because of a predominance of Mexican inhabitants. The players are seated in a circle, and the teacher calls the mail by saying, "A girl in the United States is sending a letter to a boy in Mexico. Let us see if the mail can arrive safely. All ready? A letter goes now from San Antonio in Texas to Guadalajara," whereupon the children with these names attempt to change seats. One child, chosen to be the inspector, is blindfolded in the center of the room, and tries to inspect each letter by catching a carrier as he is changing seats with another. The person who is caught in turn becomes It, and the game proceeds indefinitely.

ESCONDA LA NAVAJA (HIDE-THE-KNIFE)

"Let's play Button-button," said a child one day, after the playing of some of the games.

"I know a game," said the teacher, "which the Mexican children play that is much like Button-button. Would you like to play it?"

The children are divided equally and stand facing each other. The lines stand at one end of the room, and a goal is set at the other end. The leader at the head of one line hides an object in the hands of one of the children on his side. The children hold their hands behind them, and the hiding proceeds as in Button-button. When the object has been hidden, the leader of the opposite side is given three chances to guess who has the object. If he guesses correctly, the last one in his line may run and jump in the direction of the goal as far as he can from where the leader is standing. He then becomes leader in line and his side moves up behind him. In the event that a leader fails to guess, the last child on the side which did the hiding may jump. Turns in hiding are rotated from one side to the other. The winning side is the one first reaching the goal.

EL PAJARO PINTO (THE SPOTTED BIRD)

This game, which has been arranged from the original rhymes used by the Mexican children, has elements very similar to many games played by children in this country, for example, Go-in-and-out-the-windows.

The boys and girls circle around one who is in the center, chanting or singing:

A little spotted bird was seen
High upon a tree-bough green.
Beneath his wing a letter had he,
And in his beak was a flower for thee.
When will I see my love?
When will I see my love?

As the bird chooses his love the children continue:

At the feet of my love on bended knee
I kneel with affection and loyalty.
Both hands I gladly reach out to thee,
For I want to live in the tall green tree.

The game continues as the person chosen in turn becomes the bird.

GLOSSARY

a-di-os' .....good-by
a-do'be (ah-tho'bay in Mexican, but anglicized a-dō'bē) .....sun-dried brick, or a building made of it
bon-i'ta, or bon-i'to .....beautiful
A-gui-lar'
Can'di-da
ca'sa .....house
Con-sue'lo .....girl's name, meaning comfort
Cas'tro
fri'jo-les .....beans
ha-cen-da'do (silent h) ..farmer; owner of ranch
ham'bre (silent h).....hunger; used as part of phrase, *tengo hambre,* "I have hunger."
Juan (Hwan)
Lo'pez
ma-ma-ci'ta .....'little mother," term of endearment
mañ-a'na .....tomorrow
me-ta'te .....slightly hollowed stone on which corn is ground
mil gra'cias (ia almost a diphthong here: as shas) .....a thousand thanks
Mon-te-rey'
mu-cha-cho .....boy
mu'chas gra'cias .....many thanks
na-ci-mi-en'to .....nativity
ni'ña .....little girl
ni'ño .....little boy
pa'sa por den'tro! .....come in!

pi-ña'ta .....package of Christmas toys or candies, usually a hollow clay image, to be broken as part of the Christmas Eve festivities

po-sa'da .....inn; night's lodging; applied to Christmas Eve celebration of the nativity

Pue'bla

Ra-fa-el'

re-bo'zo .....Mexican woman's head-covering; usually dark blue

Re-fu-gi'o

sa-ra'pe .....blanket worn by Mexican men

señ-or' .....Mr.; sir; gentleman

señ-or'a .....Mrs.; madam; lady

señ-or-i'ta .....Miss; young lady

tor-ti'lla .....cornmeal cake

KEY TO PRONUNCIATION

a, as in father
e, as in they (approximately)
i, as in machine
o, as in for
u, as in pull
c before a, o, u, or a consonant, like k
d at end of word or between vowels, approximately th, as in father
g before a, o, u, or a consonant, hard, as in go; before e or i, like h
j, like h
ll, as in million
ñ, as ny in canyon
x, ks or gs
c and z, like ss in hiss (not the Castilian th)

All vowels fully sounded, except the u in gue, gui, que, qui, and in some other diphthongs, as ue in Puebla and Consuelo.

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